

MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP **12¢**

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

7
DEC.

THE
VULTURE
LOOKS TOO
SURE OF HIMSELF!
HE MUST HAVE A
FOOL-PROOF PLAN
TO DEFEAT ME!
BUT--WHAT CAN
IT *BE*?

A MARVEL SUPER-SPECTACULAR:
"the **VULTURE'S
RETURN!**"



HERE IS SPIDER-MAN
AS YOU LIKE HIM...
FIGHTING! JOKING! DARING!
CHALLENGING THE MOST
DANGEROUS FOE OF ALL, IN THIS--
THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS!



THE RETURN OF THE VULTURE

NEVER LET IT BE SAID THAT THE MARVEL COMICS GROUP DOESN'T RESPOND TO THE WISHES OF ITS READERS!

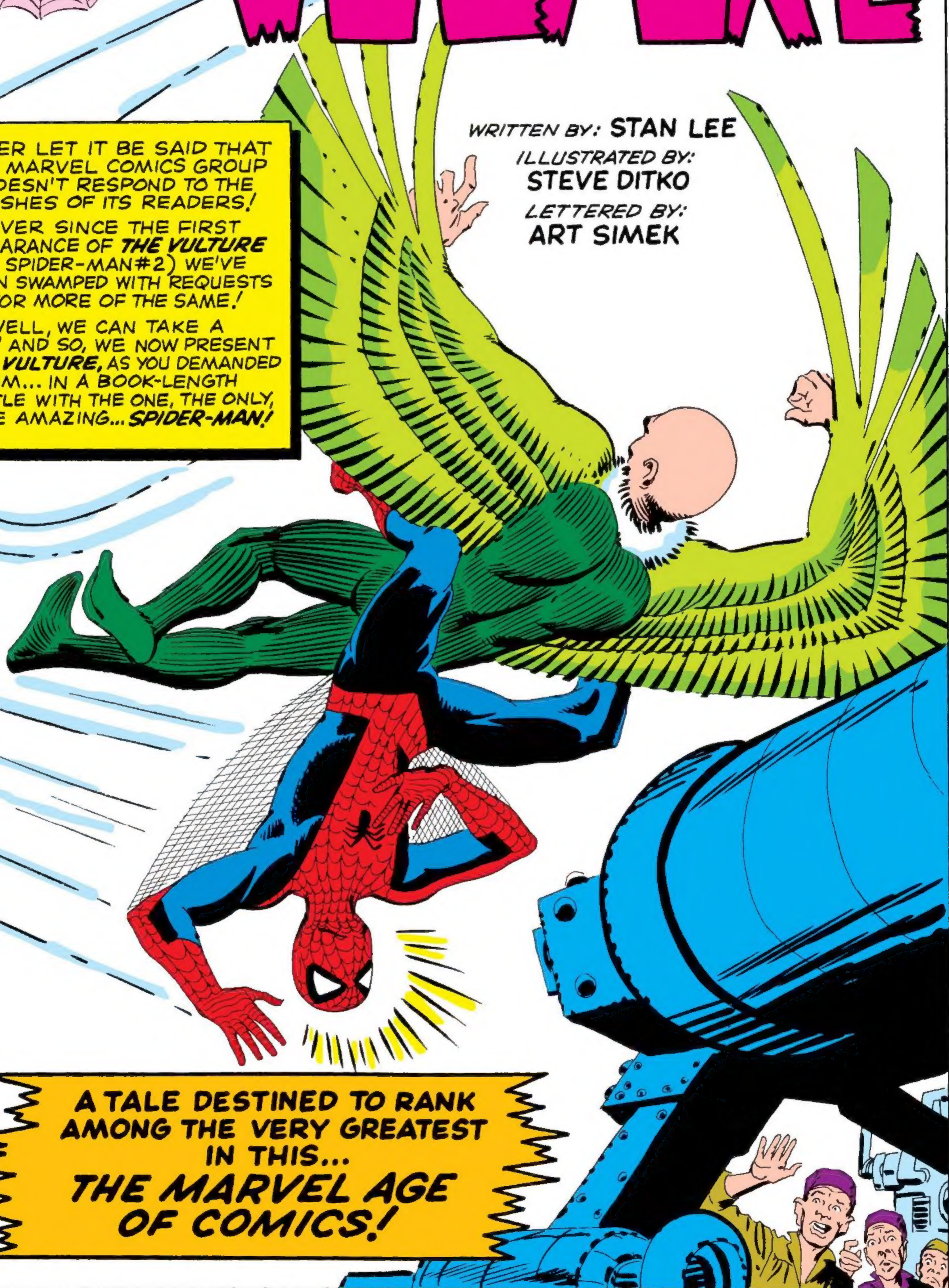
EVER SINCE THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF *THE VULTURE* (IN SPIDER-MAN #2) WE'VE BEEN SWAMPED WITH REQUESTS FOR MORE OF THE SAME!

WELL, WE CAN TAKE A HINT! AND SO, WE NOW PRESENT *THE VULTURE*, AS YOU DEMANDED HIM... IN A BOOK-LENGTH BATTLE WITH THE ONE, THE ONLY, THE AMAZING... *SPIDER-MAN*!

WRITTEN BY: STAN LEE

ILLUSTRATED BY:
STEVE DITKO

LETTERED BY:
ART SIMEK

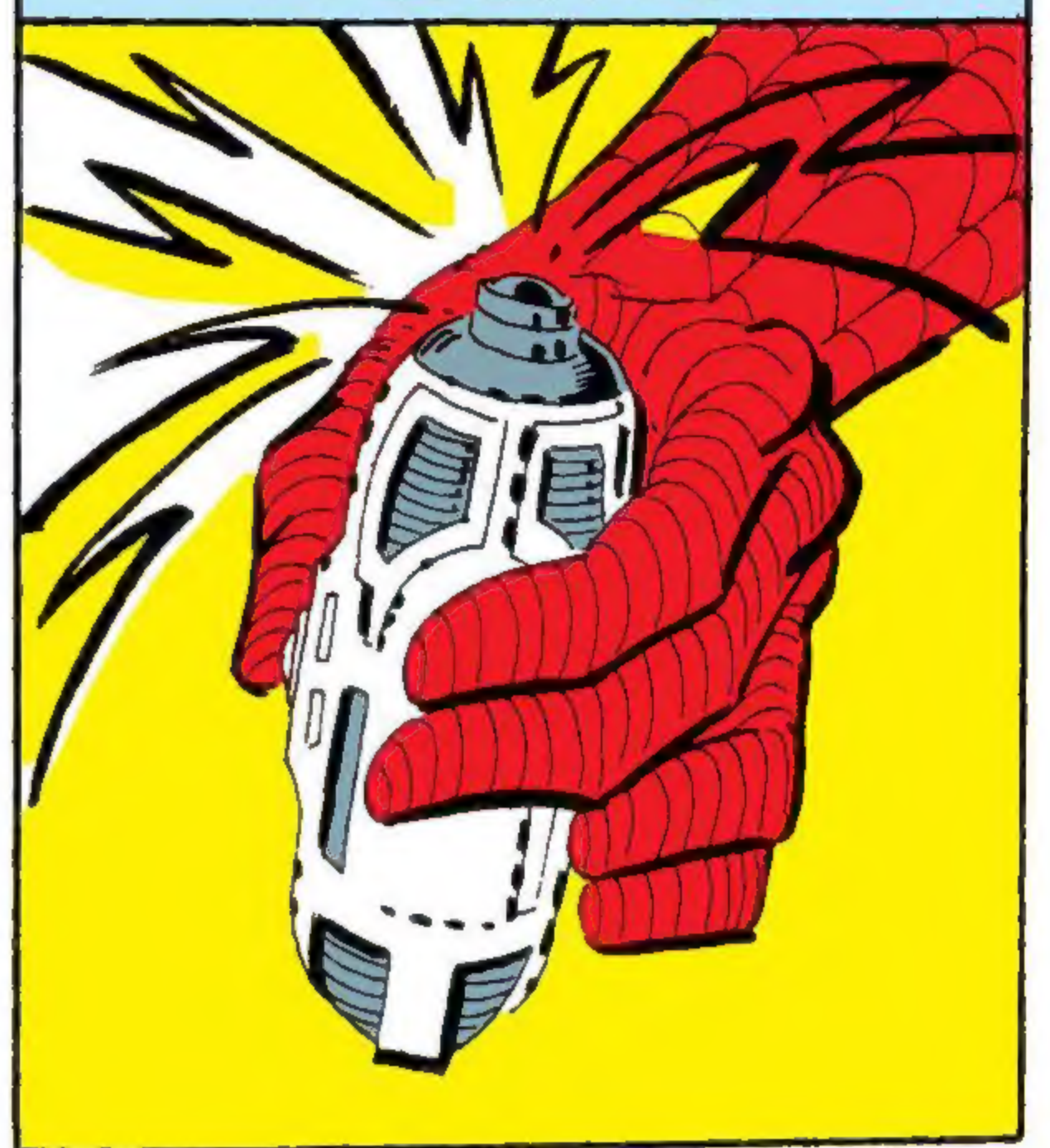


A TALE DESTINED TO RANK
AMONG THE VERY GREATEST
IN THIS...
**THE MARVEL AGE
OF COMICS!**

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO MISSED **SPIDER-MAN#2**, IT CONCERNED HIS SPECTACULAR BATTLE WITH ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS VILLAINS OF ALL TIME...THE AWESOME FLYING **VULTURE!** NO MAN KNEW THE SECRET BEHIND THE VULTURE'S ABILITY TO FLY...UNTIL SPIDER-MAN DEDUCED THAT HIS WINGS WERE OPERATED BY A UNIQUE FORM OF **MAGNETIC POWER...**



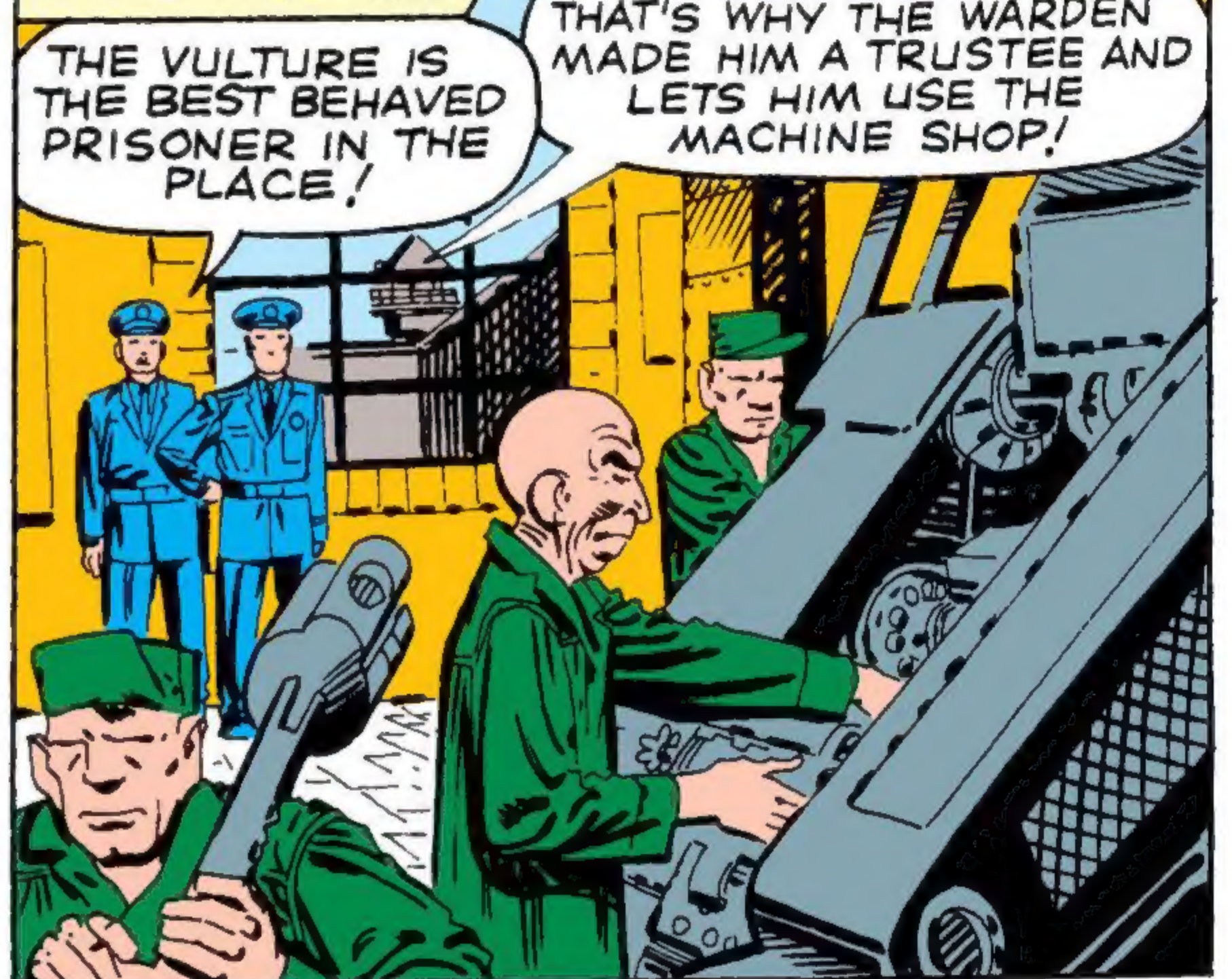
...AND SO, SPIDER-MAN CREATED A POWERFUL **ANTI-MAGNETIC INVERTER** WHICH HE USED AGAINST THE VULTURE IN THEIR FINAL BATTLE...



WITH HIS MAGNETIC POWER NULLIFIED, DUE TO **SPIDER-MAN'S** INVERTER, THE VULTURE WAS FORCED TO SPIRAL TO THE GROUND, INTO THE WAITING ARMS OF THE POLICE! AND SO ENDED THAT EPIC BATTLE!

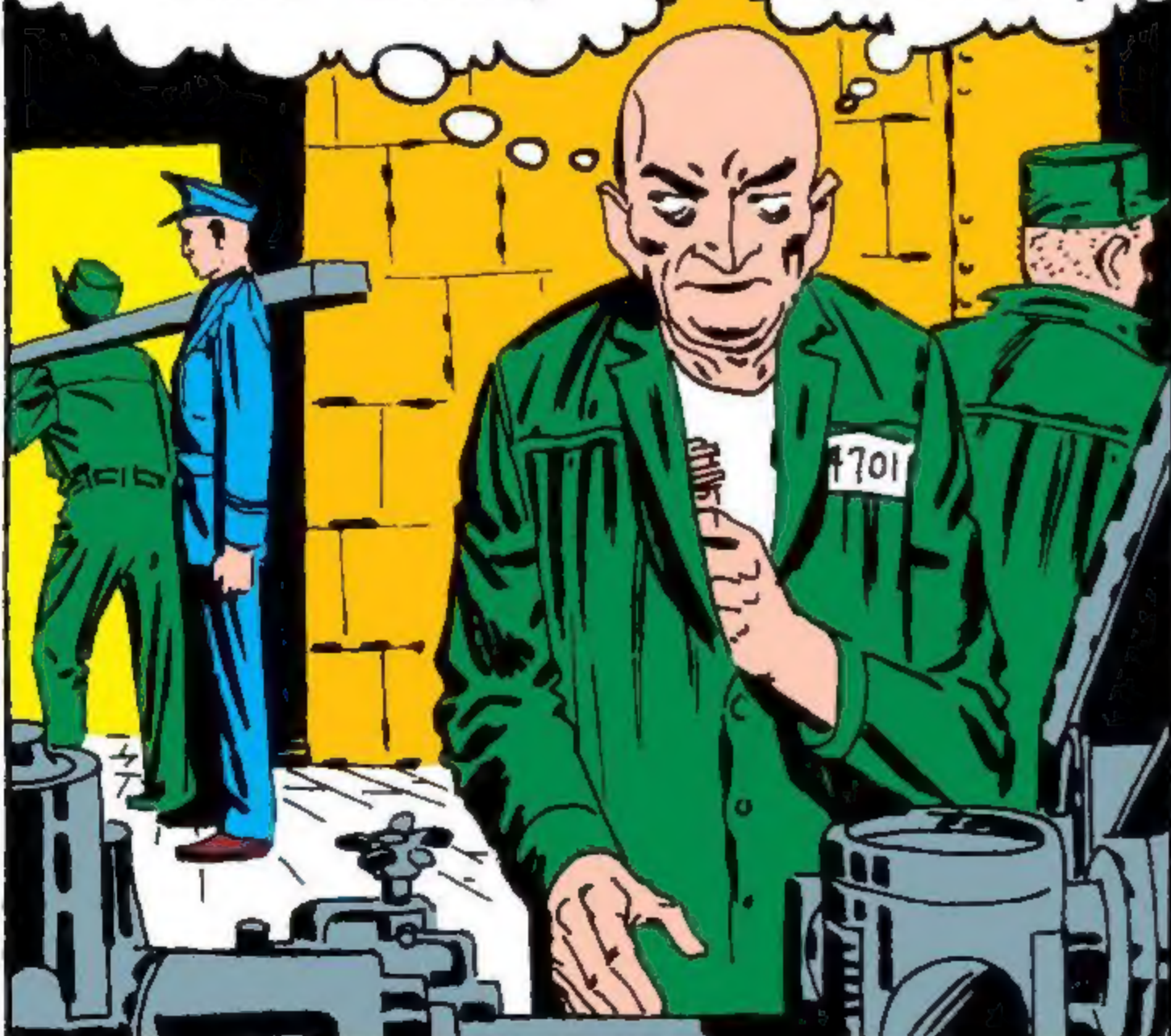


FOR MONTHS IT SEEMS THAT SPIDER-MAN'S PREDICTION IS CORRECT, AS THE IMPRISONED VULTURE BECOMES A MODEL INMATE OF STATE PRISON...



THE GULLIBLE FOOLS! THEY DON'T SUSPECT THAT I'M PUTTING TOGETHER **ANOTHER** FLYING DEVICE FOR MYSELF--RIGHT UNDER THEIR NOSES!

I'VE TAKEN ALL THE PARTS I NEED! TONIGHT I'LL MAKE MY FINAL TEST IN MY CELL!



AND, AFTER BED CHECK...

IT WORKS! NOT AS POWERFUL AS MY ORIGINAL FLYING DEVICE...

... BUT GOOD ENOUGH TO GET ME OVER THE WALL--TO FREEDOM!



THE NEXT DAY, DURING EXERCISE PERIOD IN THE PRISON COURTYARD...

FAREWELL! IT IS TIME FOR **THE VULTURE** TO FLY AGAIN!

LOOK! HE MADE HIMSELF A NEW FLYING GIZMO! HE'S GLIDING OVER THE WALL!



HOW EASY IT WAS! BY THE TIME THE GUARDS CAN ORGANIZE A SEARCH PARTY, I'LL BE SAFELY HIDDEN, MILES AWAY!

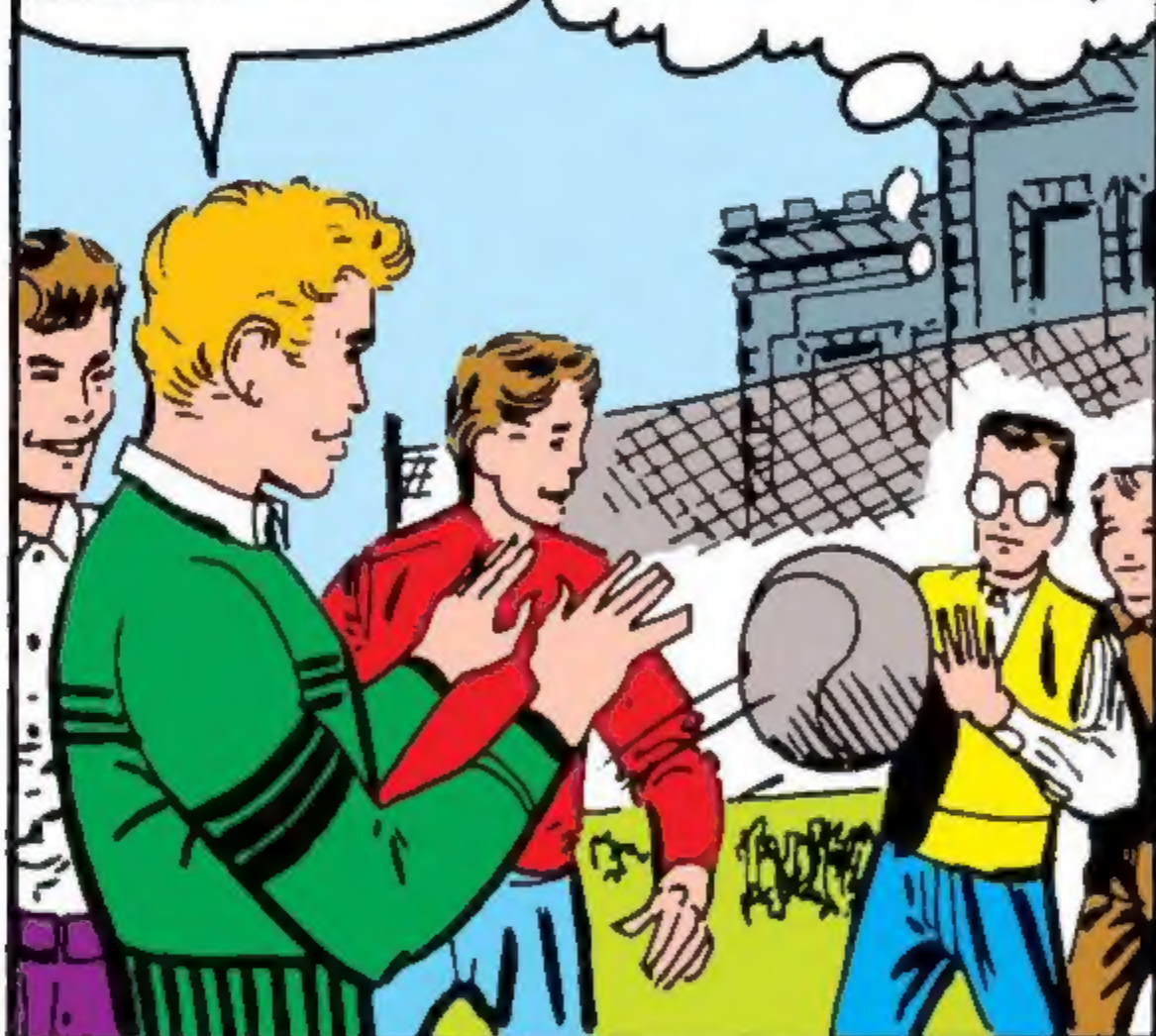
AND, WHEN NEXT I APPEAR, I'LL HAVE A **NEW** SET OF WINGS... FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN BEFORE!



MEANWHILE, IN THE SCHOOL YARD AT MIDTOWN HIGH, SOME VOLLEYBALL PRACTICE IS IN PROGRESS...

HERE, BUTTERFINGERS! THINK YOU CAN TOSS THAT BIG, BAD, HEAVY BALL ALL THE WAY BACK TO ME?

IF I USED MY **SPIDER-MAN** STRENGTH, IT WOULD GO CLEAN THROUGH YOU, LOUD-MOUTH!



WE INTERRUPT OUR PROGRAM TO BRING YOU A SPECIAL BULLETIN! **THE VULTURE** HAS ESCAPED FROM STATE PRISON! ALL CITIZENS ARE URGED TO LOCK THEIR DOORS, AND REPORT ANY SUSPICIOUS...

THE VULTURE-- ESCAPED!!



SPIDER-MAN IS THE ONE BEST SUITED TO CATCH HIM! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE-- **FAST!**

I--I DON'T **FEEL** VERY WELL! I'LL ASK COACH SMITH IF I MAY BE EXCUSED!

WE MIGHT HAVE **KNOWN!** A FAST GAME OF VOLLEYBALL IS TOO MUCH FOR POOR PUNY PARKER!



JUST MY CRUMMY LUCK! EVERY TIME I HAVE TO TAKE OFF TO CHANGE TO **SPIDER-MAN**, EVERYONE THINKS I'M CHICKENING OUT BECAUSE OF WEAKNESS!

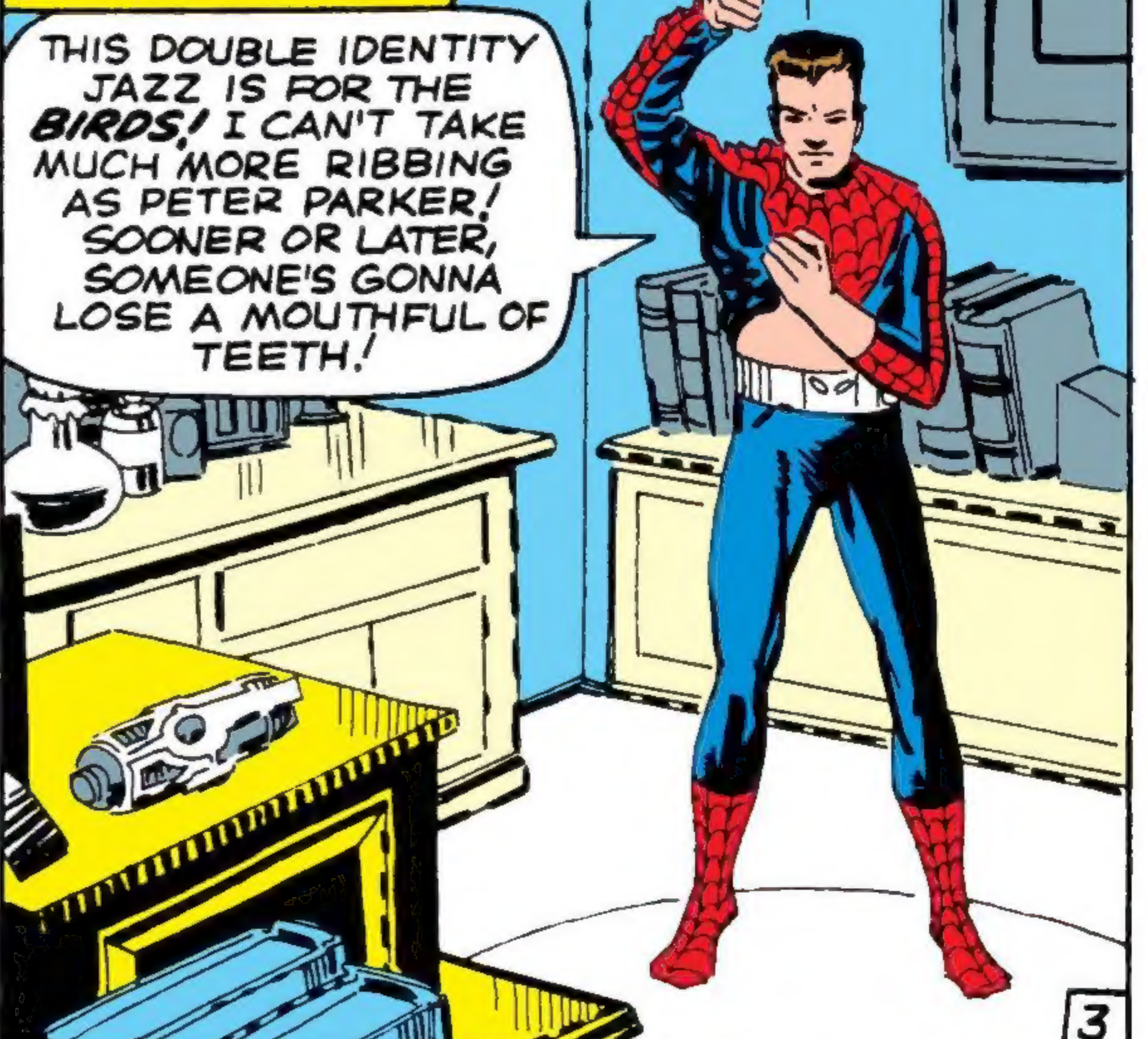
IT'S **NOT** TOO MUCH FOR ME, FLASH! I JUST HAVE A-- EH, HEADACHE, THAT'S ALL!

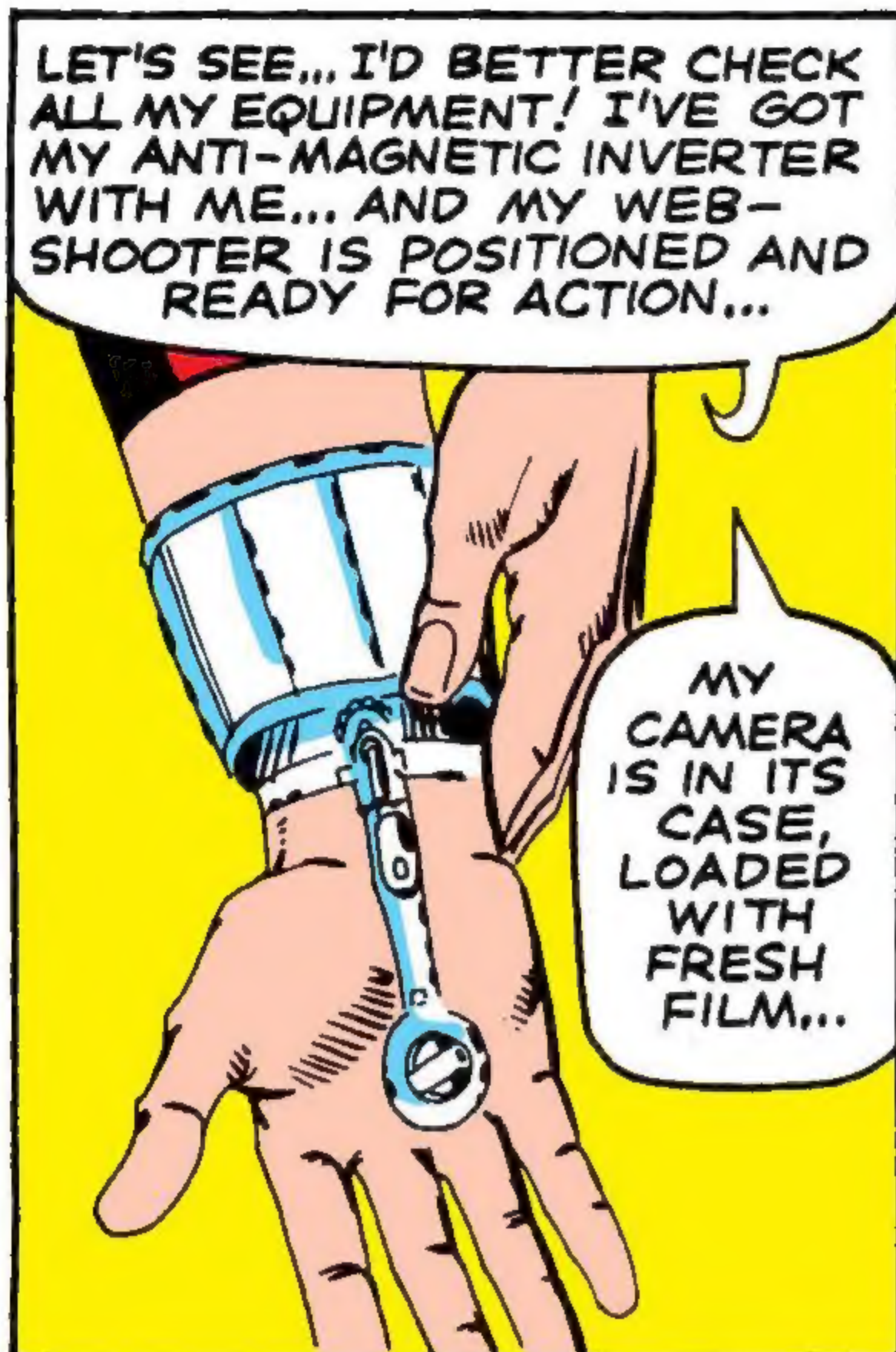
STRANGE HOW YOU ALWAYS **GET** THOSE "HEADACHES" WHENEVER SOMETHING EXCITING IS GOING ON!



LATER, AT HOME...

THIS DOUBLE IDENTITY JAZZ IS FOR THE **BIRDS!** I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE RIBBING AS PETER PARKER! SOONER OR LATER, SOMEONE'S GONNA LOSE A MOUTHFUL OF TEETH!





LET'S SEE... I'D BETTER CHECK ALL MY EQUIPMENT! I'VE GOT MY ANTI-MAGNETIC INVERTER WITH ME... AND MY WEB-SHOOTER IS POSITIONED AND READY FOR ACTION...

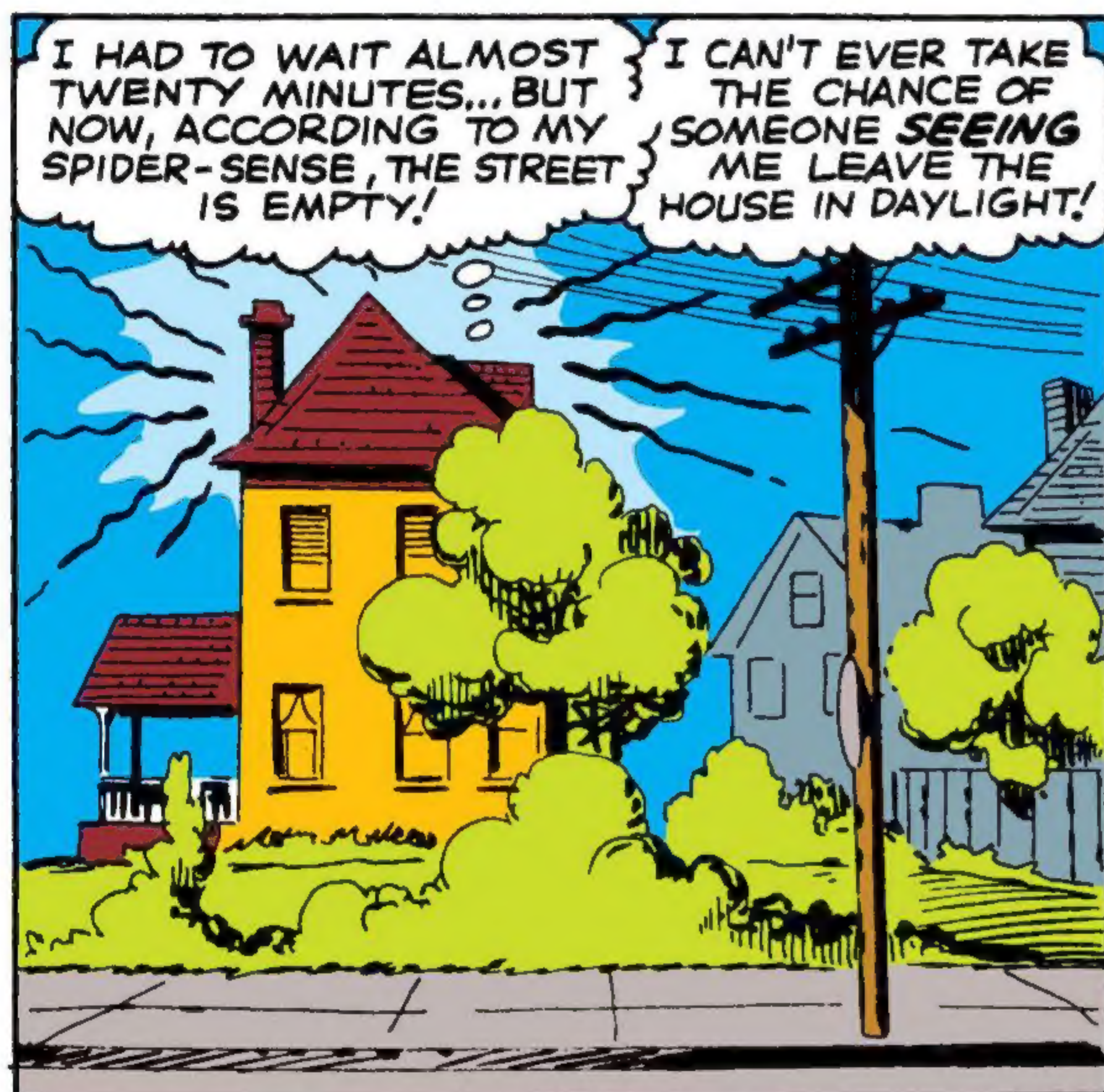
MY CAMERA IS IN ITS CASE, LOADED WITH FRESH FILM...



... I REFILLED MY WEB-FLUID CAPSULE--AND ALL DEVICES CHECK OUT... A-OKAY!



THIS WEB-SHOOTER IS THE COOLEST THING I EVER DREAMED UP! I CAN DO ALMOST **ANYTHING** WITH IT! THE VULTURE WON'T HAVE A CHANCE!



I HAD TO WAIT ALMOST TWENTY MINUTES... BUT NOW, ACCORDING TO MY SPIDER-SENSE, THE STREET IS EMPTY!

I CAN'T EVER TAKE THE CHANCE OF SOMEONE **SEEING** ME LEAVE THE HOUSE IN DAYLIGHT!

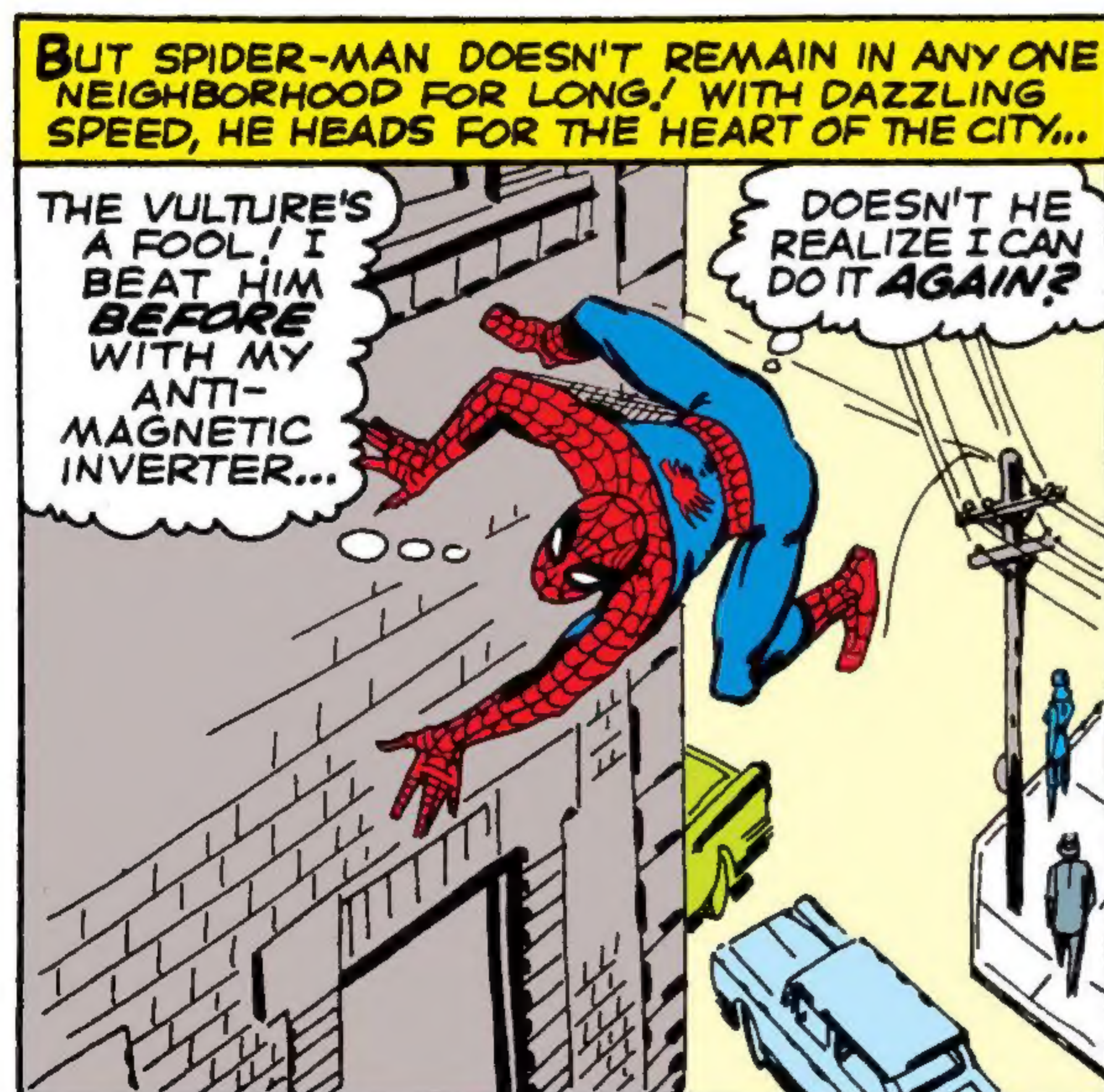


A FEW MINUTES LATER...

MOMMY! DADDY! I JUST SAW **SPIDER-MAN** SWINGING ACROSS THE ROOFTOPS!!

YOU'RE JUST IMAGINING THINGS, BOBBY!

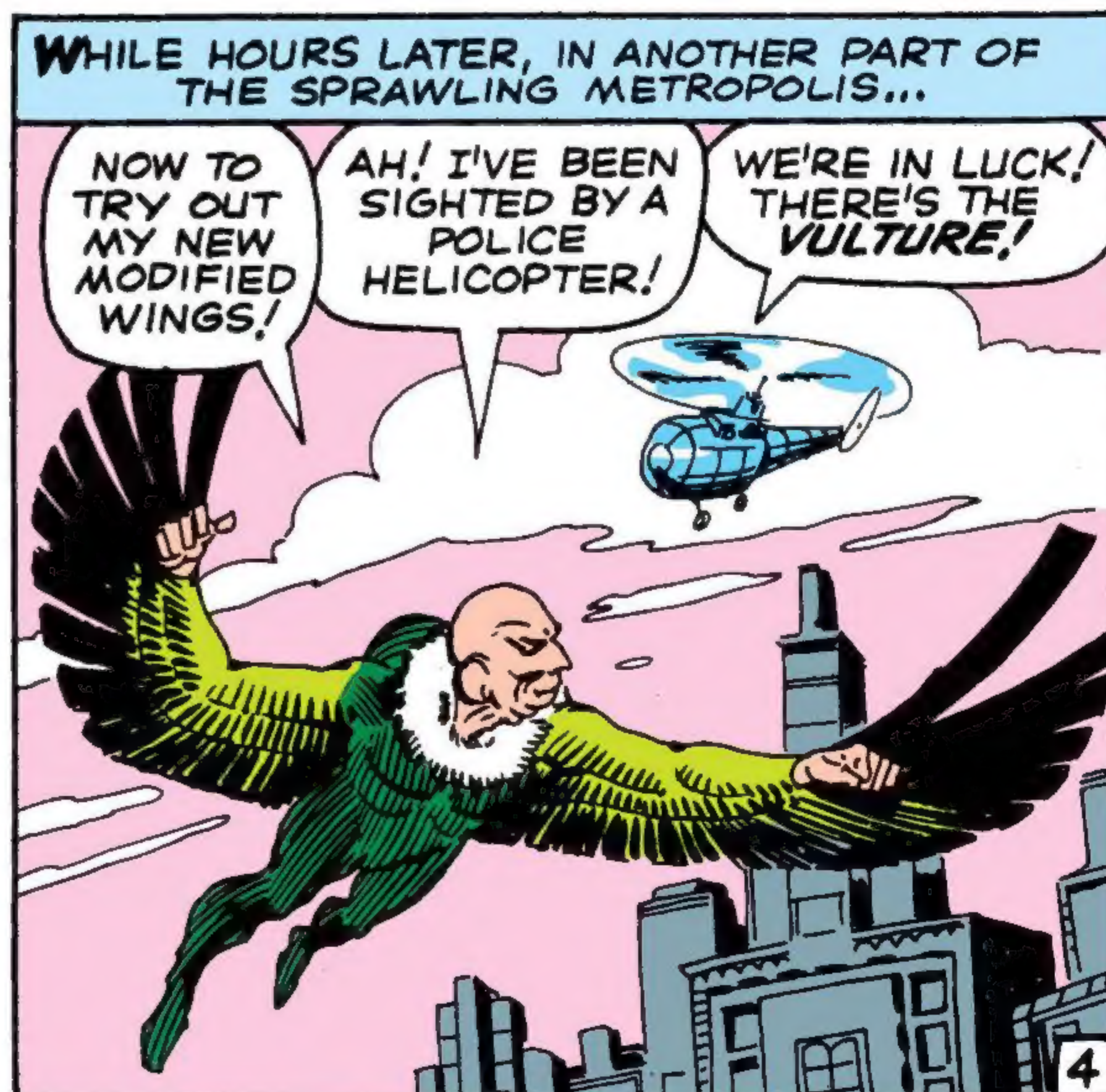
WHAT WOULD **SPIDER-MAN** BE DOING **HERE**, IN A QUIET RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD IN FOREST HILLS?



BUT SPIDER-MAN DOESN'T REMAIN IN ANY ONE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR LONG! WITH DAZZLING SPEED, HE HEADS FOR THE HEART OF THE CITY...

THE VULTURE'S A FOOL! I BEAT HIM **BEFORE** WITH MY ANTI-MAGNETIC INVERTER...

DOESN'T HE REALIZE I CAN DO IT **AGAIN**?

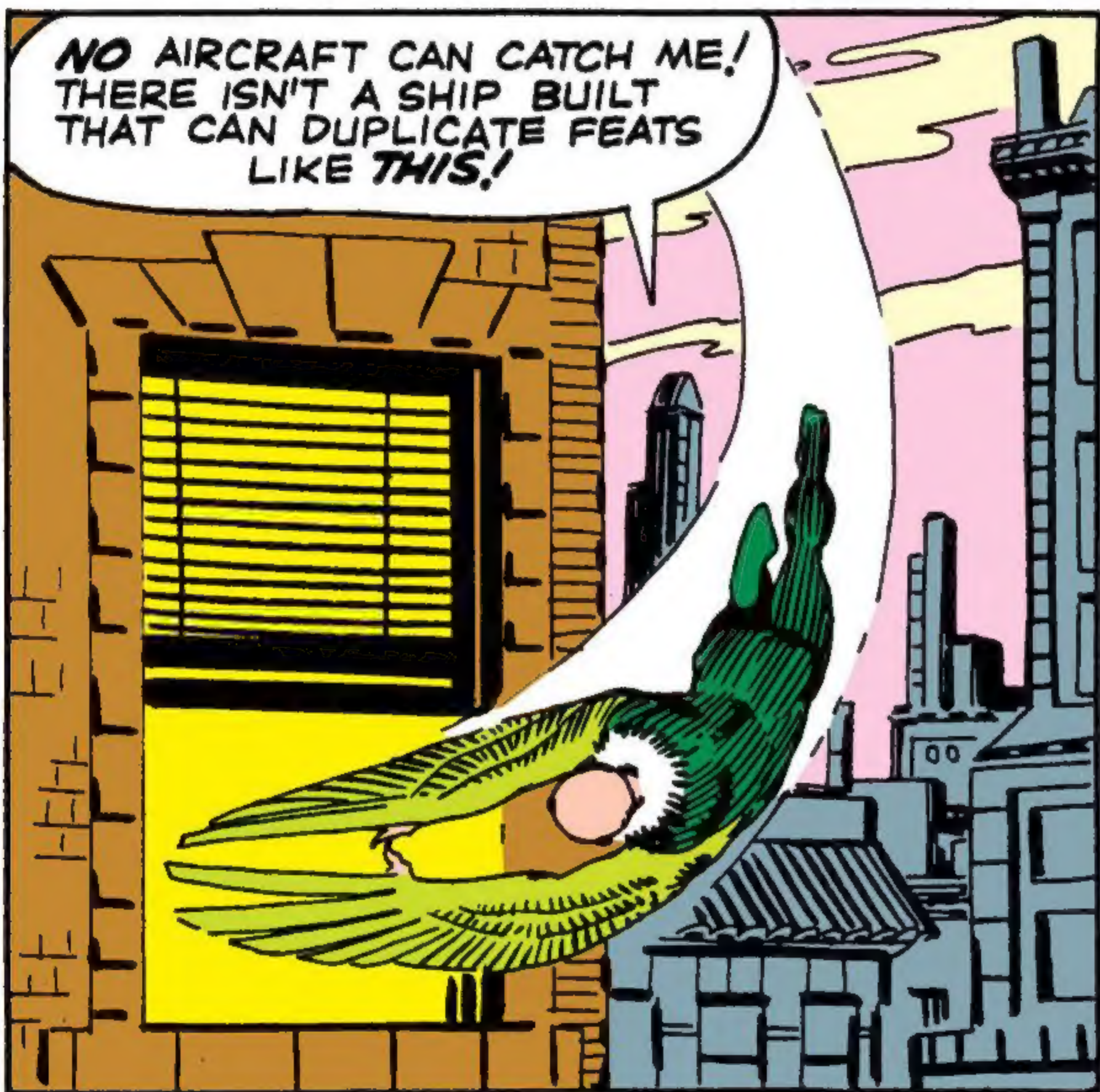
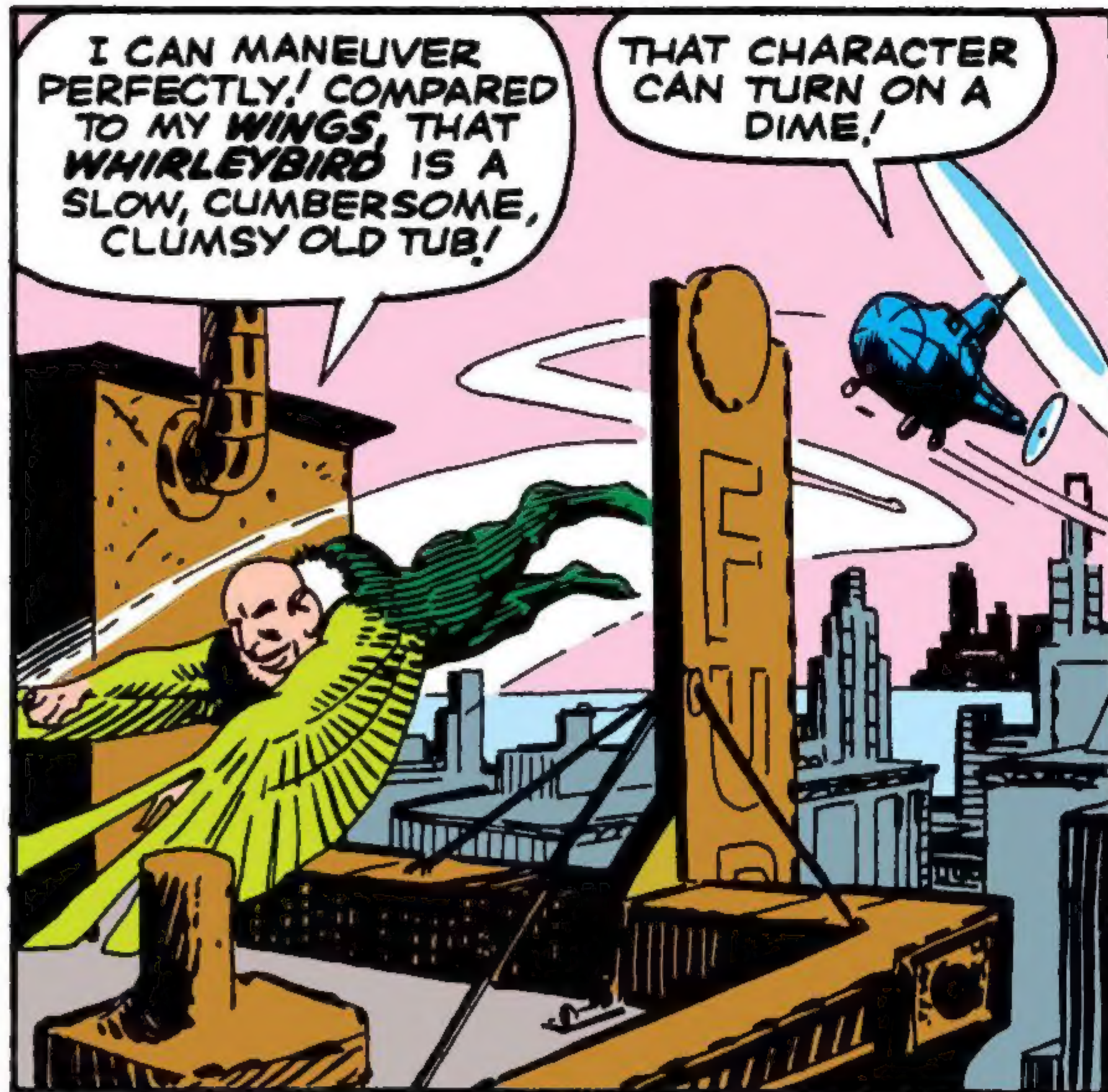
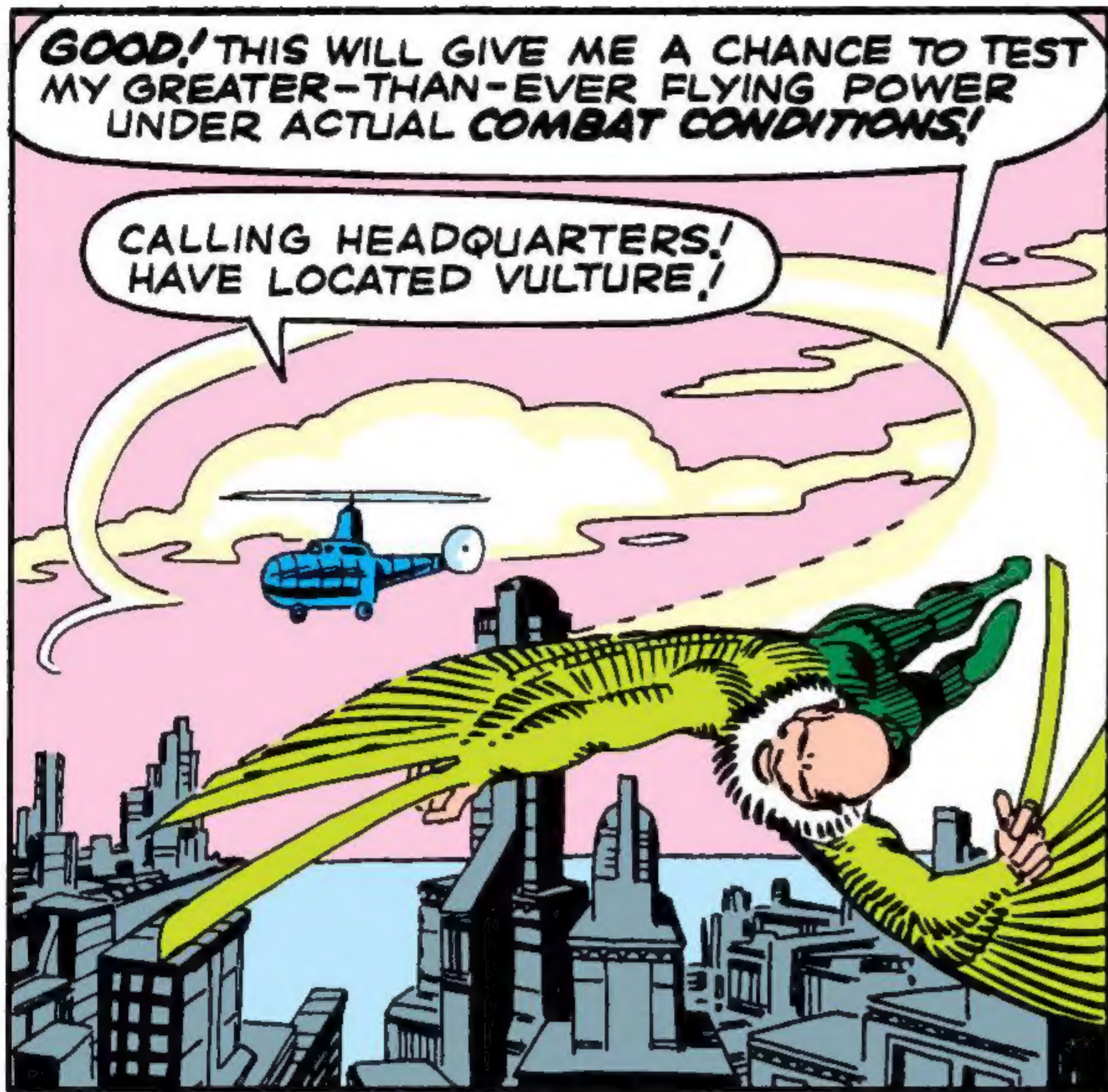


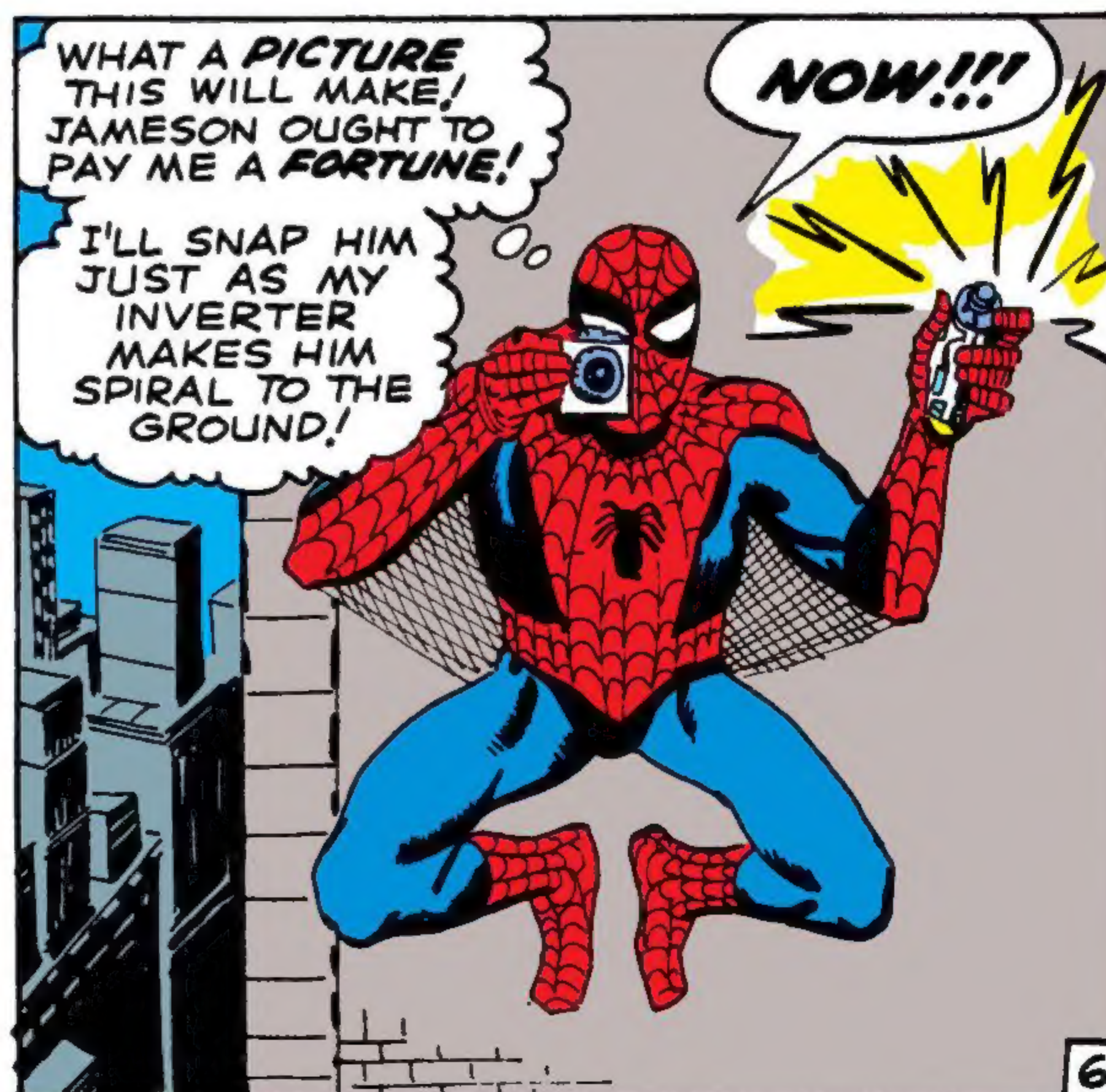
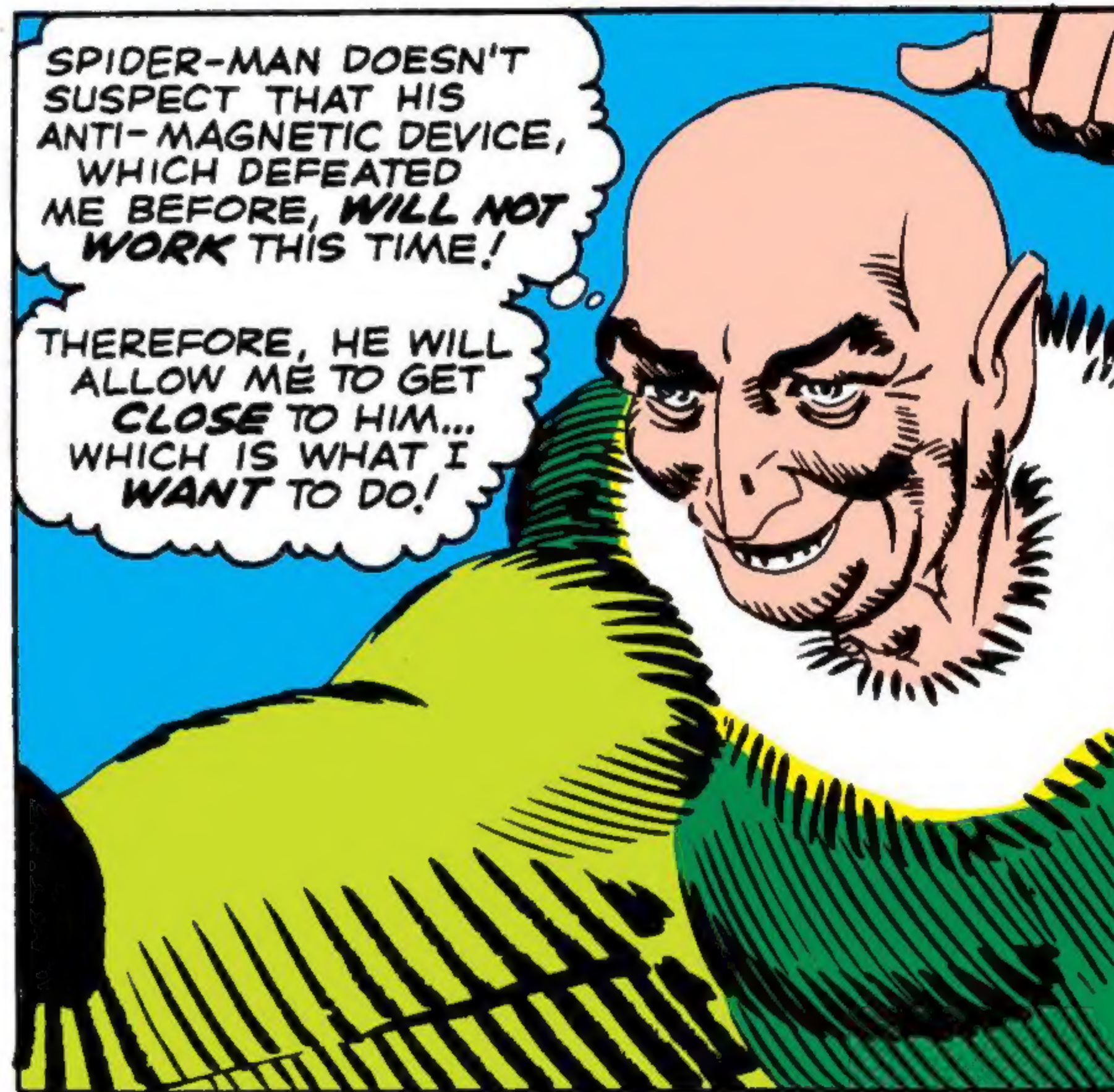
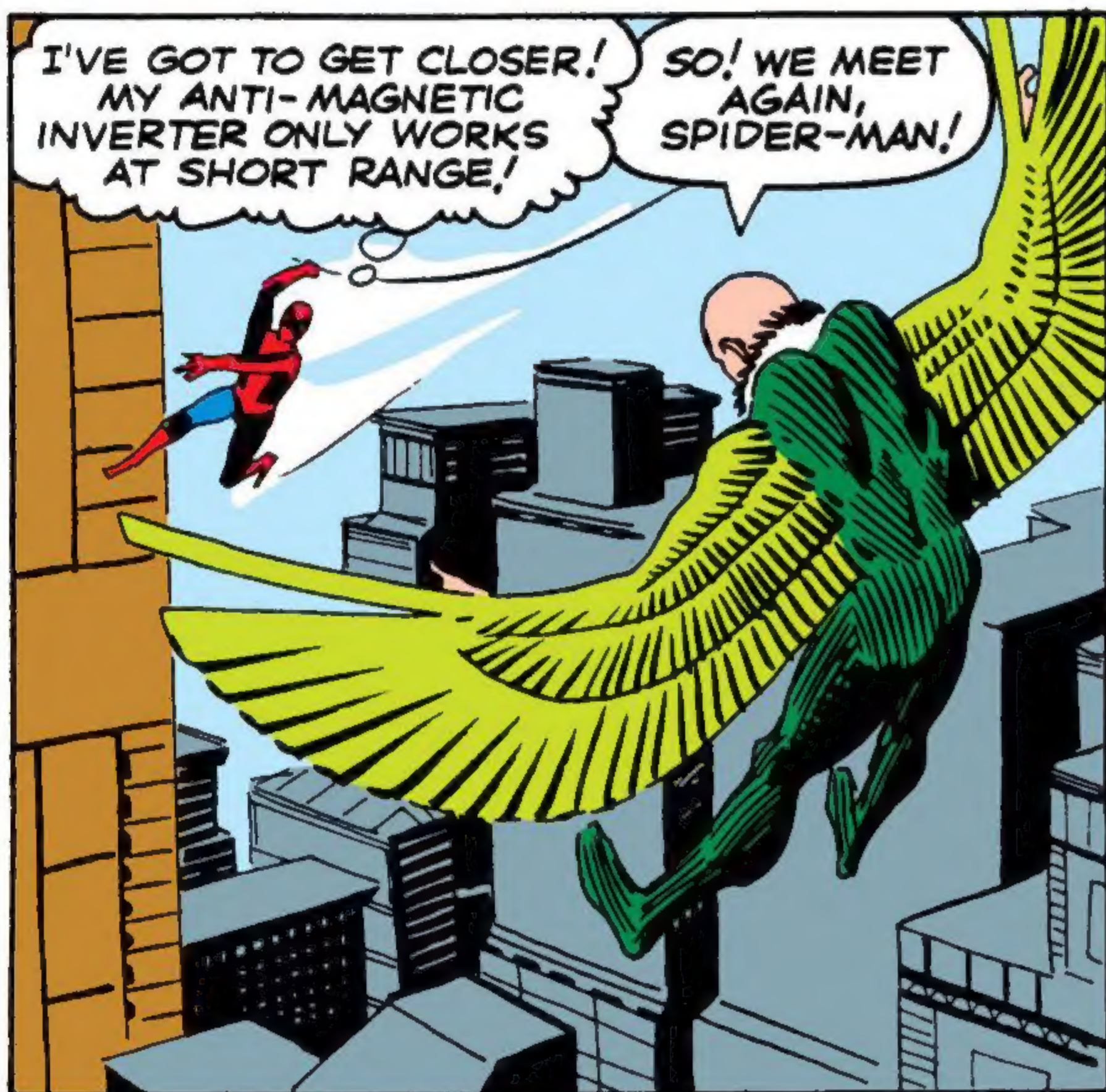
WHILE HOURS LATER, IN ANOTHER PART OF THE SPRAWLING METROPOLIS...

NOW TO TRY OUT MY NEW MODIFIED WINGS!

AH! I'VE BEEN SIGHTED BY A POLICE HELICOPTER!

WE'RE IN LUCK! THERE'S THE **VULTURE**!

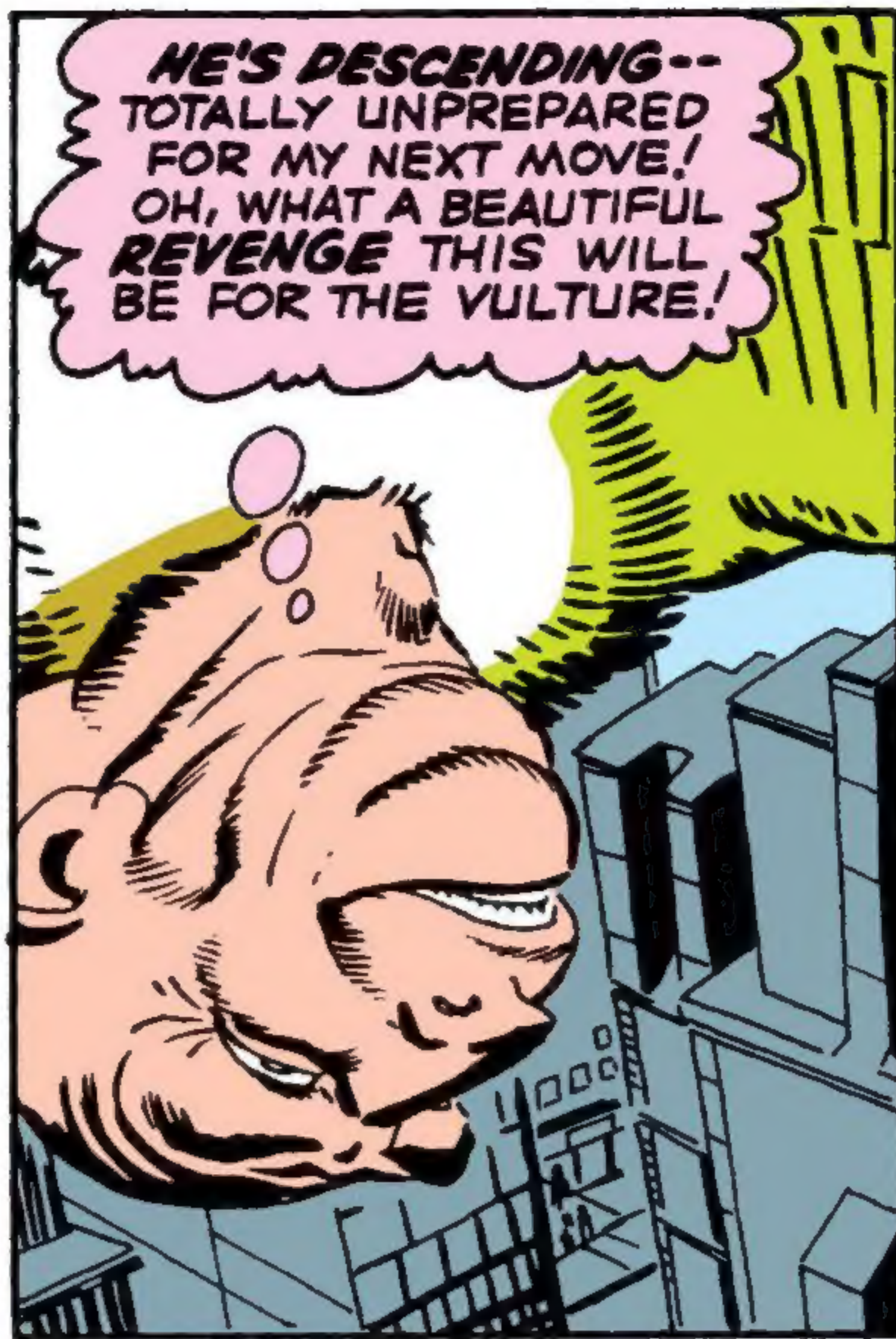




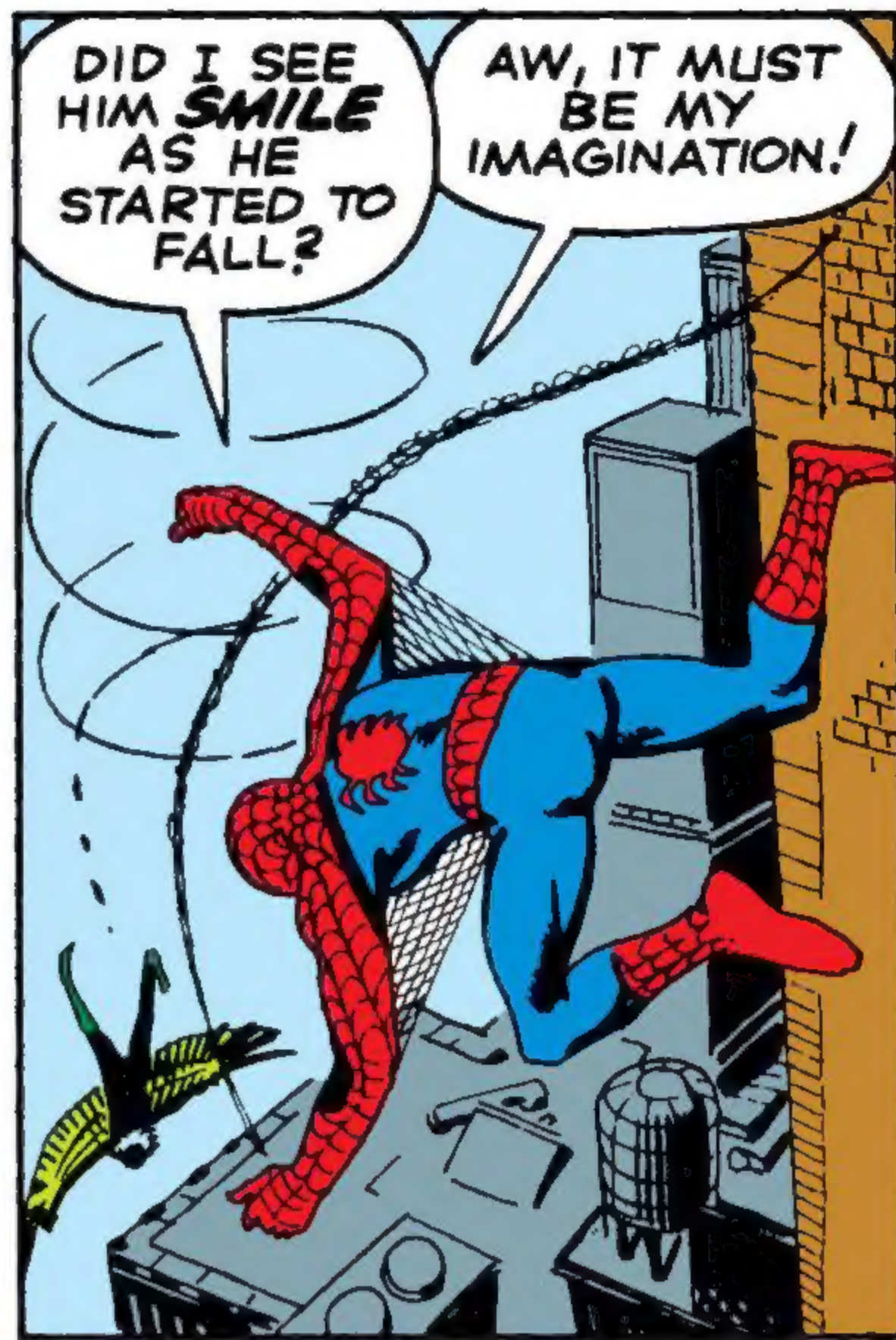


IT WORKED!
I'M ALMOST
DISAPPOINTED!
IT WAS **TOO**
EASY!

I'LL PRETEND
TO BE FALLING!
HE'S **SURE** TO
FOLLOW ME
DOWN!

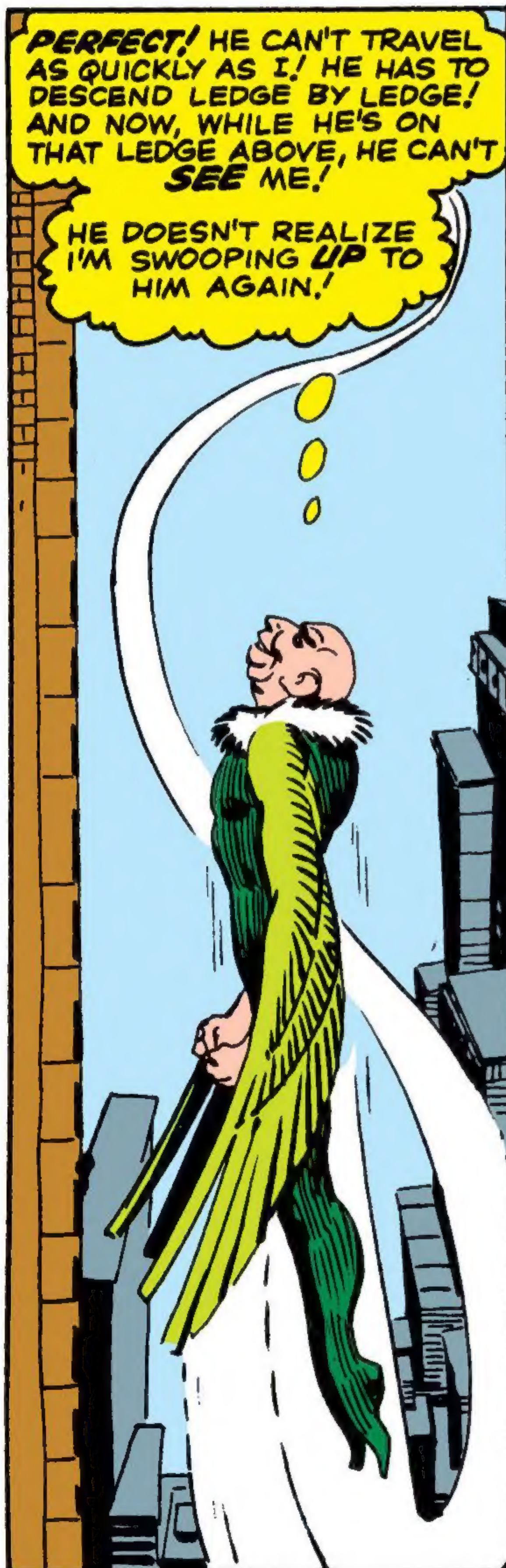


HE'S DESCENDING--
TOTALLY UNPREPARED
FOR MY NEXT MOVE!
OH, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL
REVENGE THIS WILL
BE FOR THE VULTURE!



DID I SEE
HIM **SMILE**
AS HE
STARTED TO
FALL?

AW, IT MUST
BE MY
IMAGINATION!



PERFECT! HE CAN'T TRAVEL
AS QUICKLY AS I! HE HAS TO
DESCEND LEDGE BY LEDGE!
AND NOW, WHILE HE'S ON
THAT LEDGE ABOVE, HE CAN'T
SEE ME!

HE DOESN'T REALIZE
I'M SWOOPING **UP** TO
HIM AGAIN!



MY SPIDER-SENSE IS START-
ING TO TINGLE! BUT **WHY?**
THE VULTURE MUST BE
A PRISONER ON THE GROUND
BY NOW! THERE **CAN'T** BE
ANY DANGER HERE!

IF I TIMED
IT RIGHT,
HE SHOULD
BE JUST
REACHING
THE EDGE
OF THE
PARAPET...



OHhh!

SURPRISE,
SPIDER-MAN!
EVEN **YOU**
CANNOT WARD
OFF A DOUBLE
UPPER-CUT
WHILE YOU'RE
COMPLETELY
OFF-BALANCE!

MOMENTARILY STUNNED BY THE FORCE AND TOTAL UNEXPECTEDNESS OF THE VULTURE'S ATTACK, SPIDER-MAN IS HELPLESS BEFORE HIS POWERFUL FOE'S CONTINUED ONSLAUGHT!



LOOK! UP THERE... ABOVE THE ROOFTOPS! IT'S **THE VULTURE**... BATTLING WITH **SPIDER-MAN**!

THANK HEAVEN SPIDER-MAN **FOUND** HIM! HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DEFEAT THE VULTURE SINGLE-HANDED!

GUESS AGAIN, LADY! THE VULTURE IS CLOBBERING HIM!

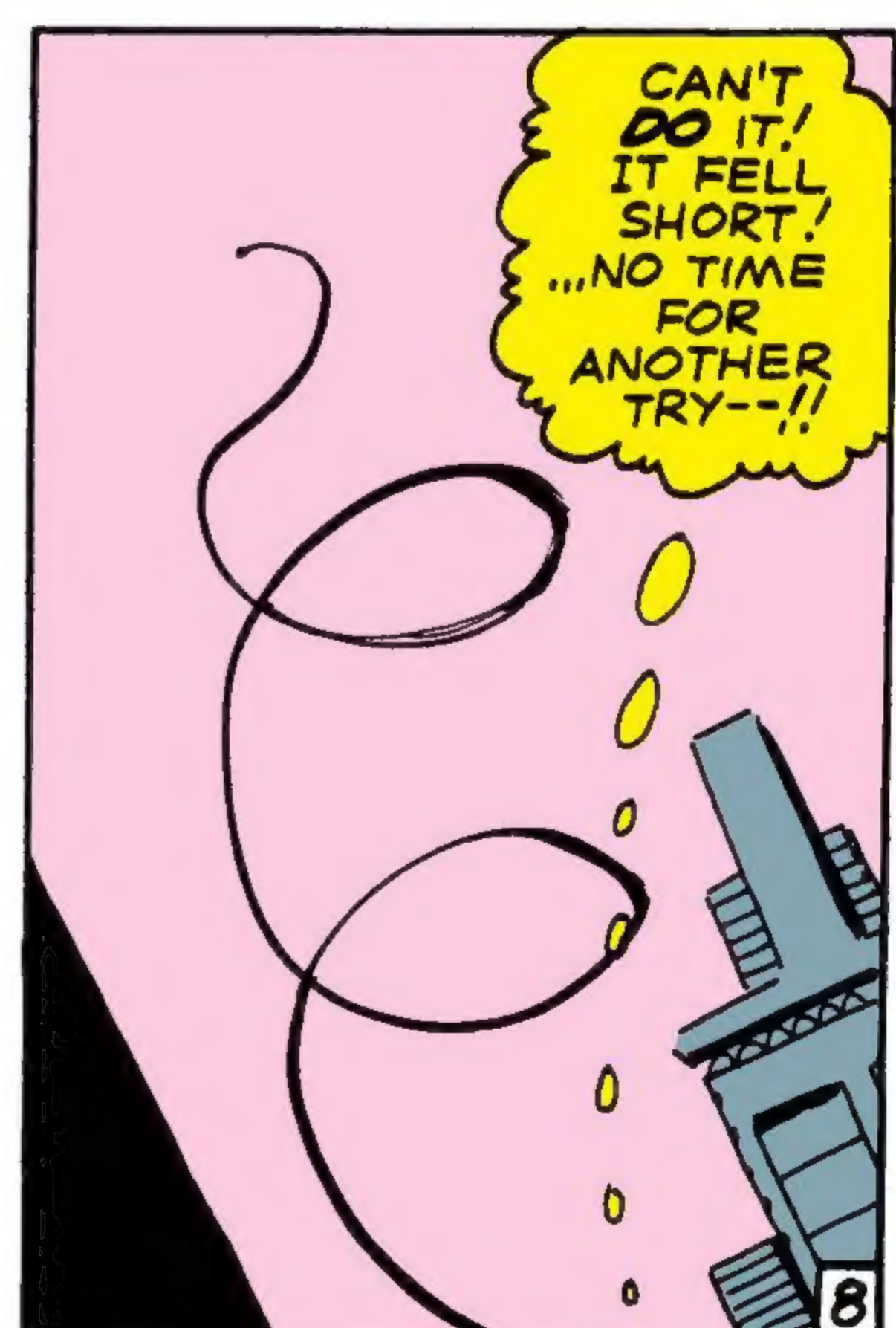
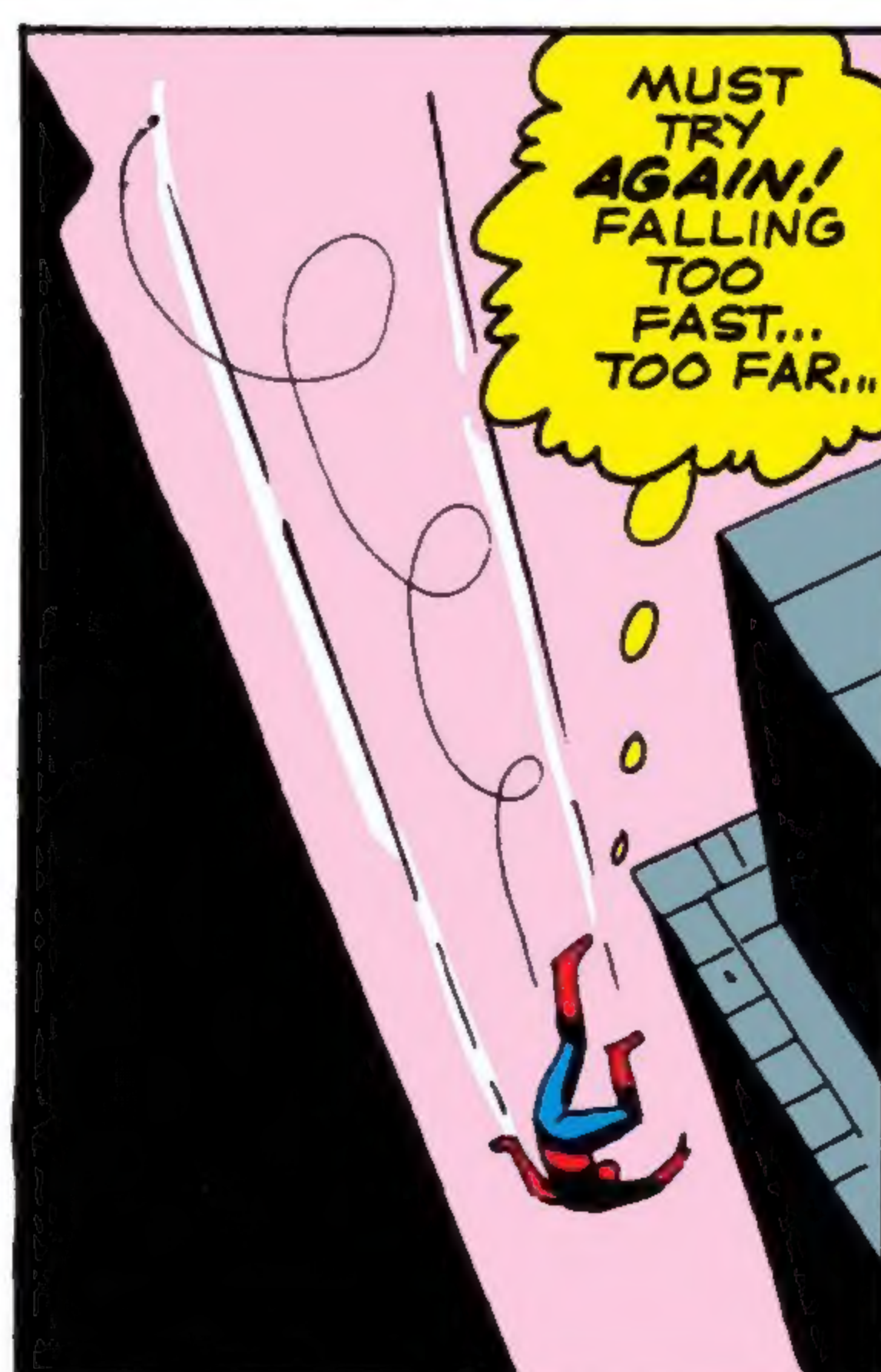
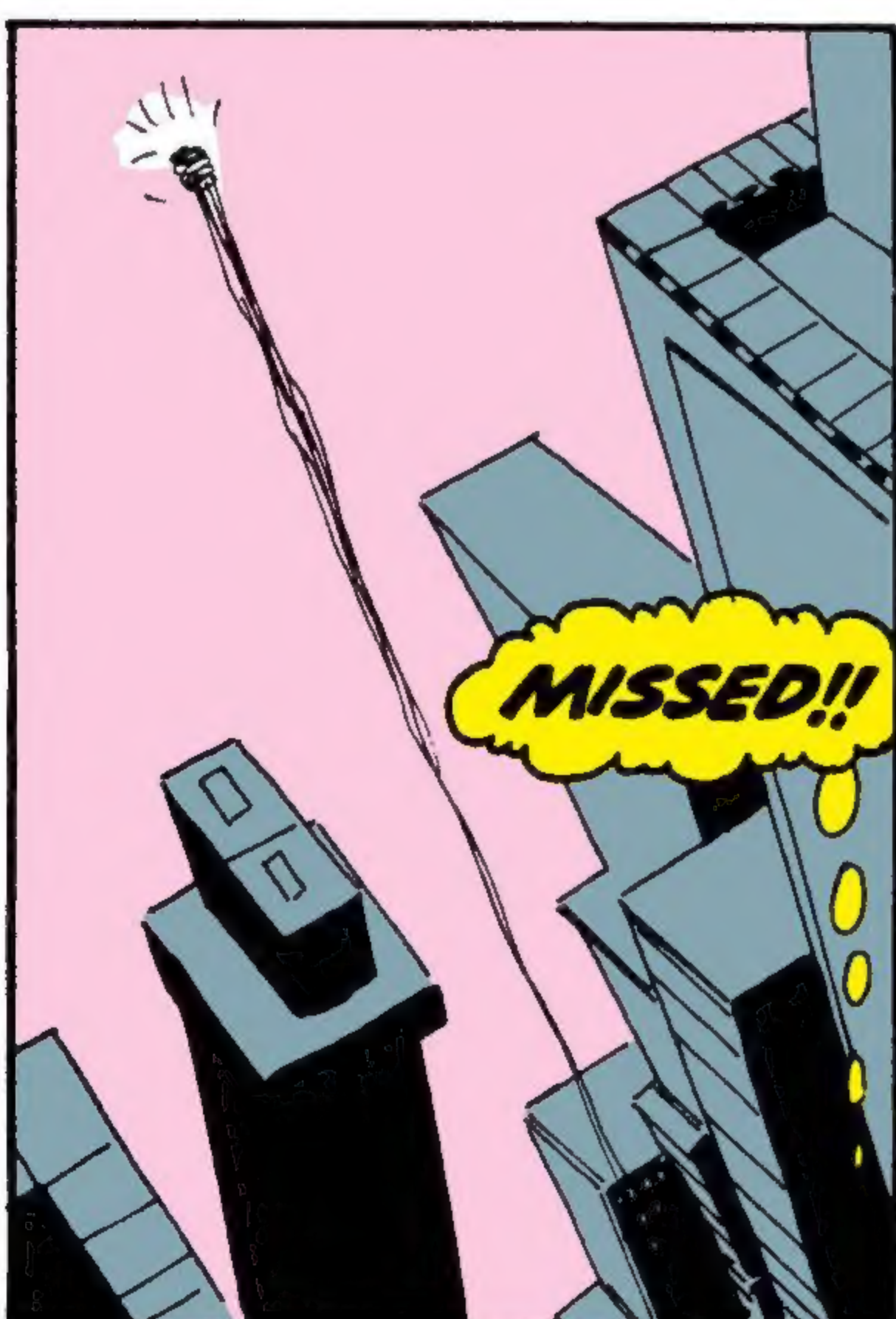


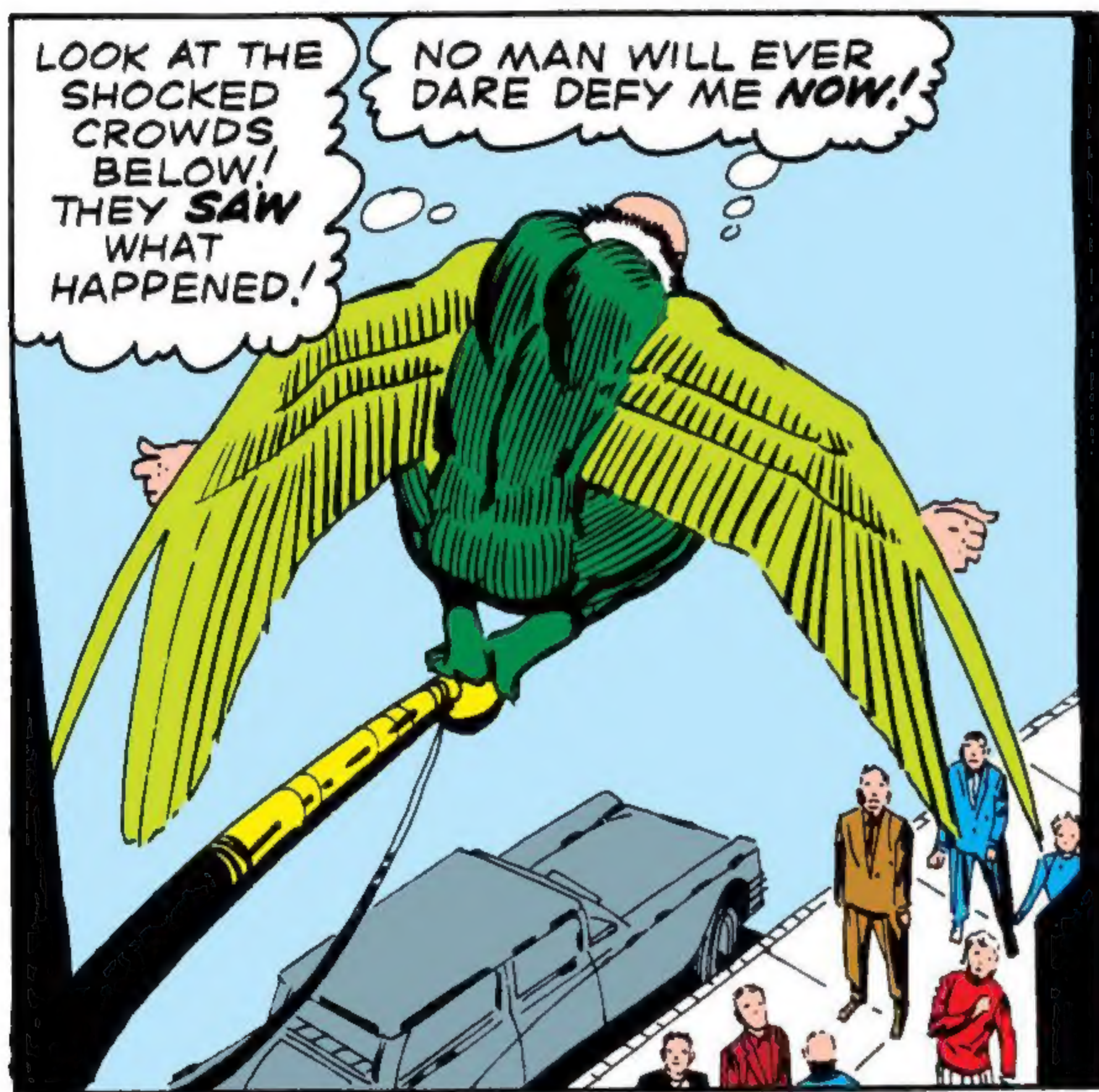
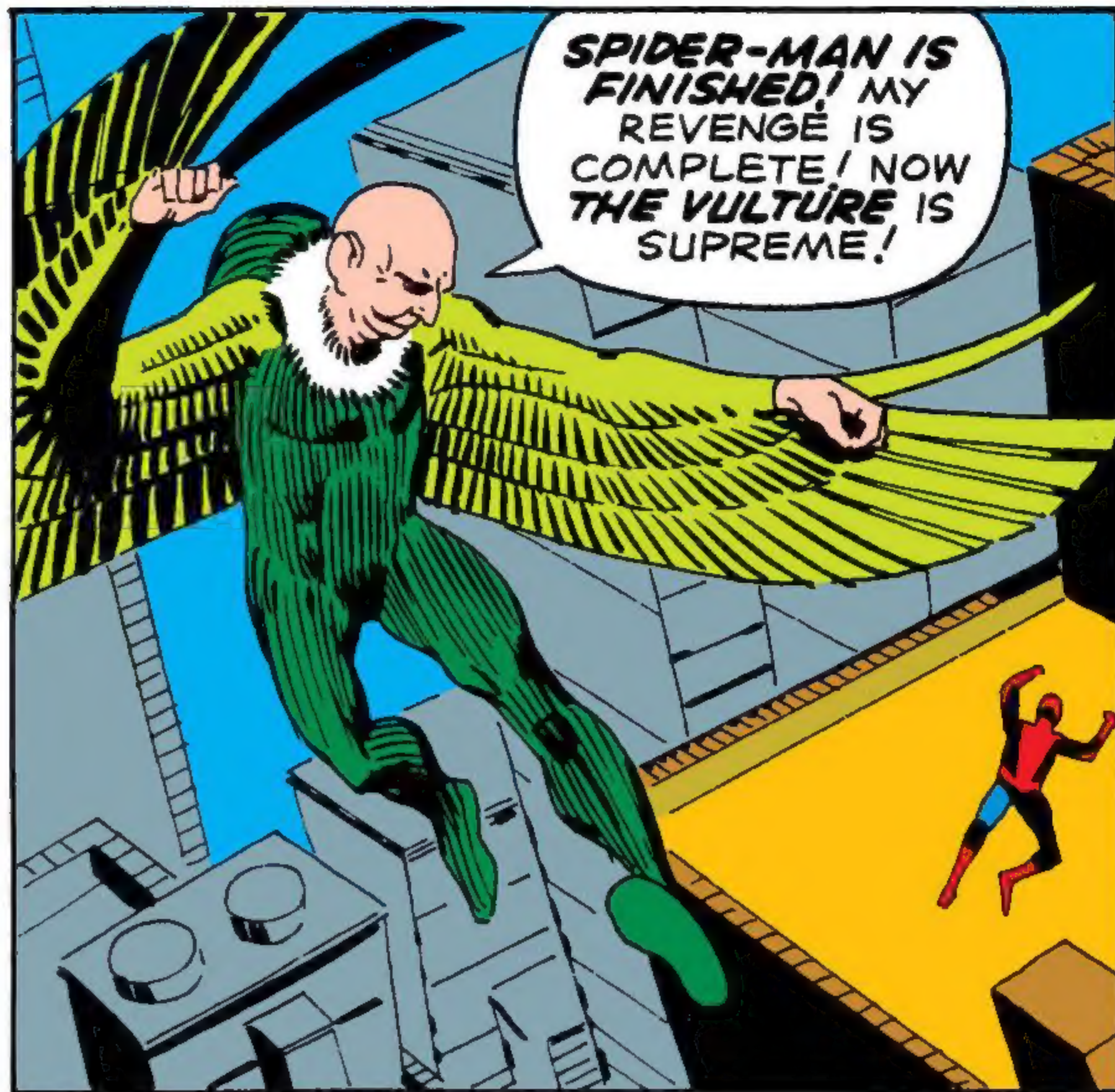
YOU NEVER SUSPECTED I HAD **IMPROVED** MY WINGS SO THAT THEY COULD CHANGE MAGNETIC POLES **INSTANTLY**, NULLIFYING YOUR USELESS INVERTER!



HAPPY LANDINGS, SPIDER-MAN!

GOT TO SHOOT MY WEB--FAST-- CATCH ON TO BUILDING--BREAK MY FALL--





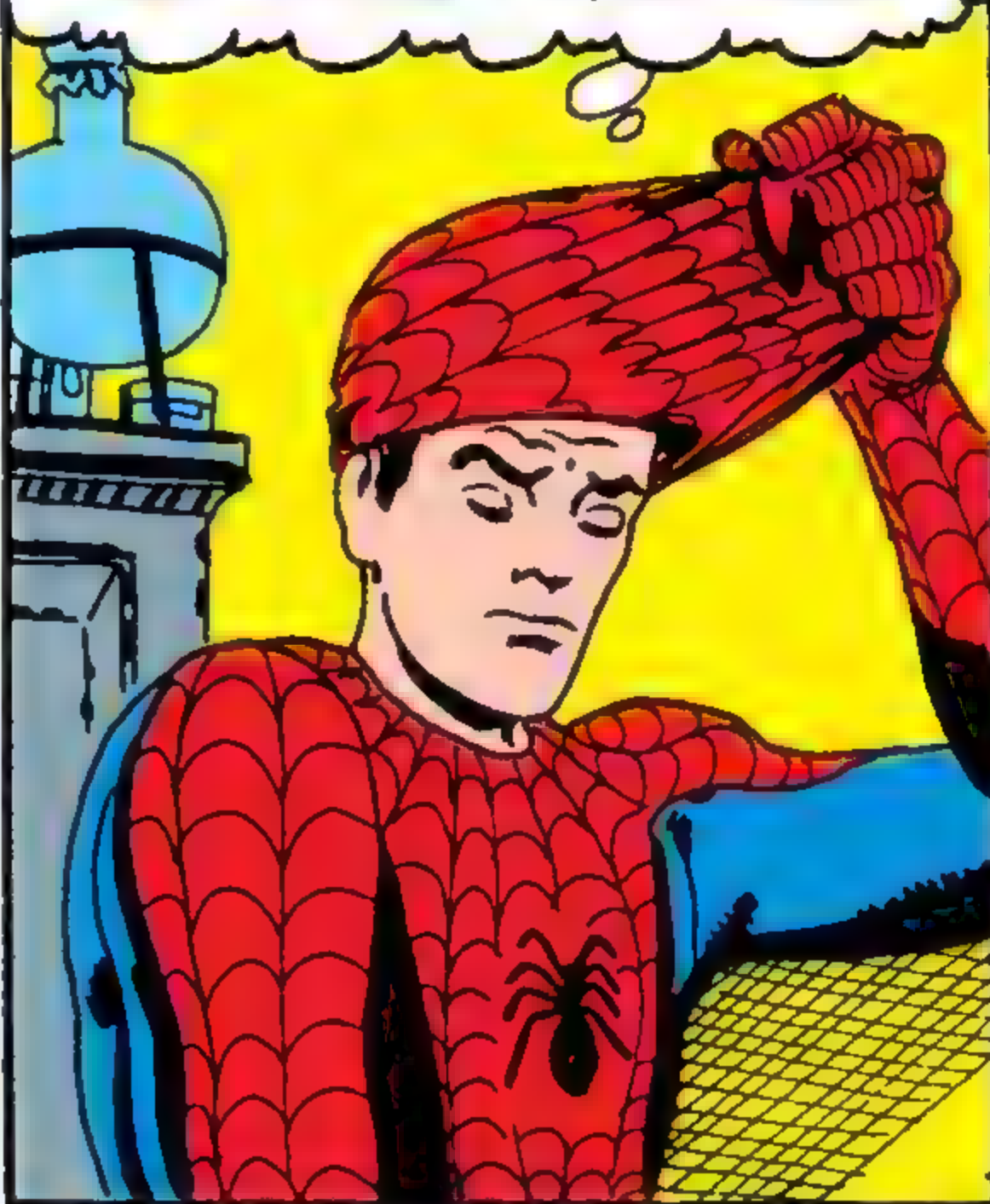
WEARILY, CAUTIOUSLY, SPIDER-MAN REACHES HIS HOME, AND THEN QUIETLY, ENTERS THRU A REAR WINDOW...

DON'T THINK I BROKE ANY BONES...

THE ARM IS PROBABLY JUST SPRAINED!



BUT BOY, DOES IT EVER HURT!! WON'T BE ABLE TO USE IT FOR DAYS! WELL, BETTER CHANGE BACK TO PETER PARKER NOW WHILE I STILL CAN...



BUT, JUST THEN...

PETER, IS THAT YOU? I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMEONE IN THERE!

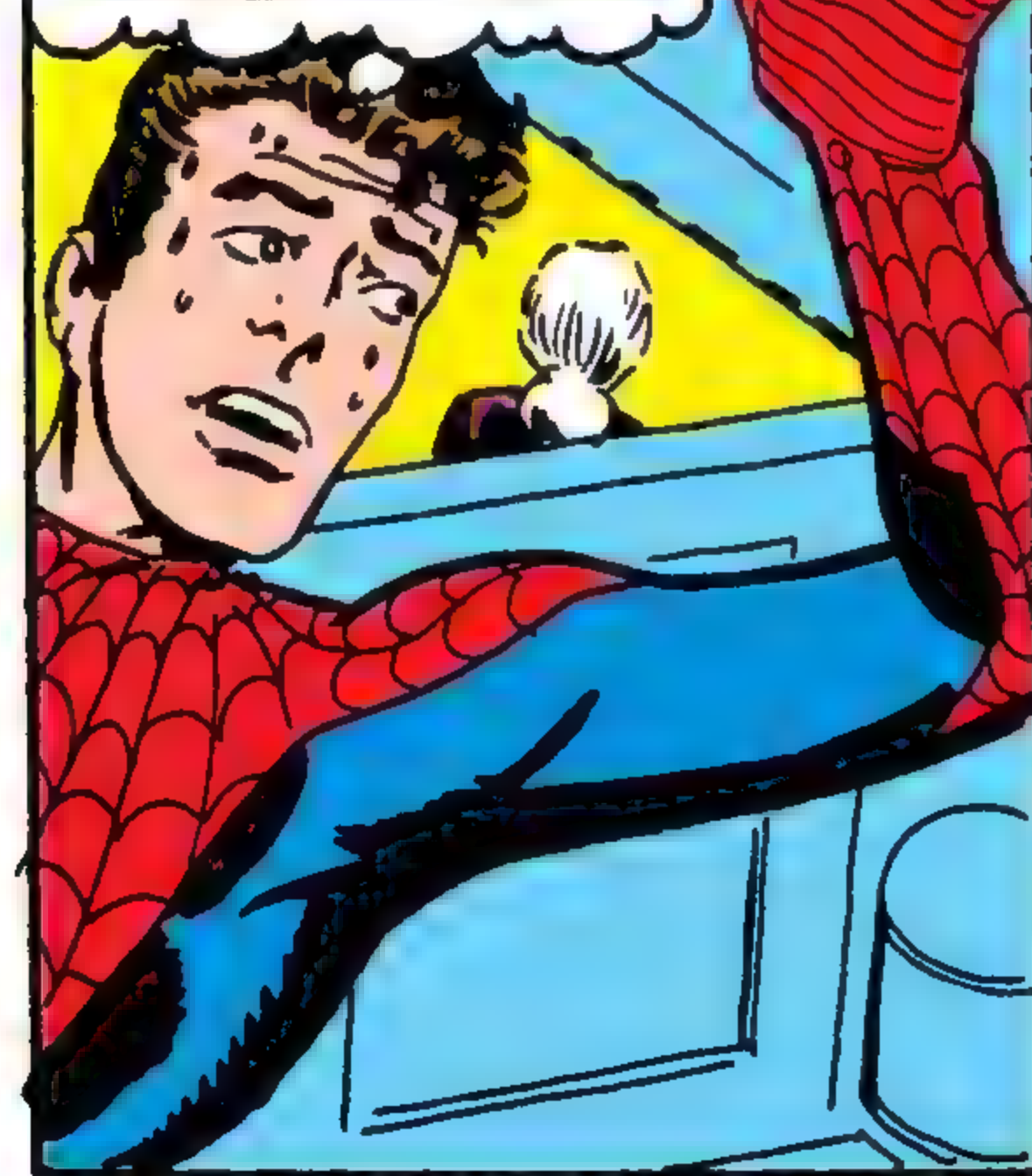
AUNT MAY! CAN'T LET HER FIND ME HERE LIKE THIS! SHE'S OPENING THE DOOR!!



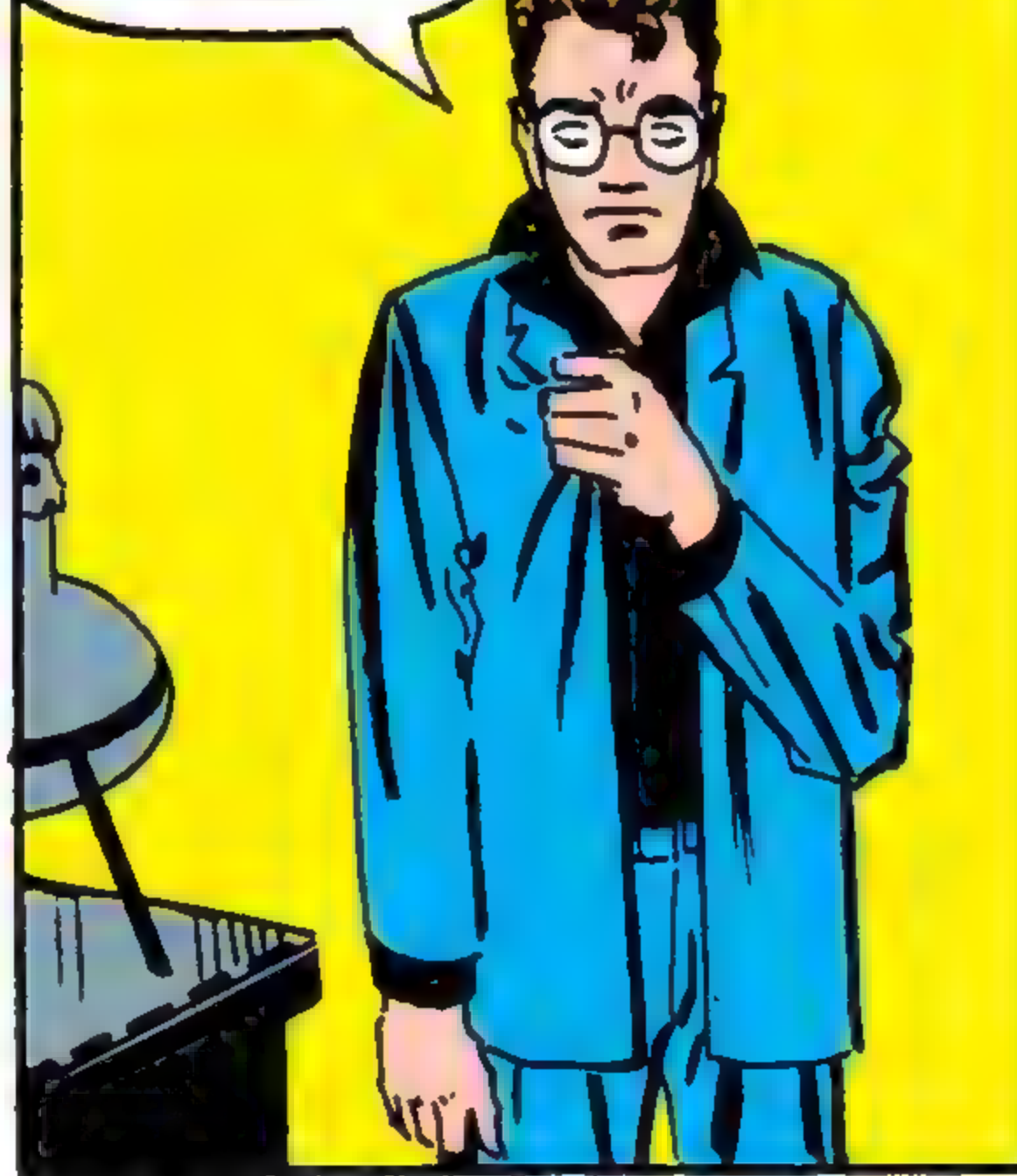
ALTHOUGH, IT'S STRANGE THAT HE'S NOT HERE YET! HE KNOWS HOW I WORRY WHEN HE COMES HOME LATE! HE'S SUCH A FRAGILE BOY...NOT A ROUGHNECK LIKE THAT FLASH THOMPSON!



WHEW! THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE! IF AUNT MAY EVER SUSPECTED THE TRUTH ABOUT FRAGILE ME--WOW!

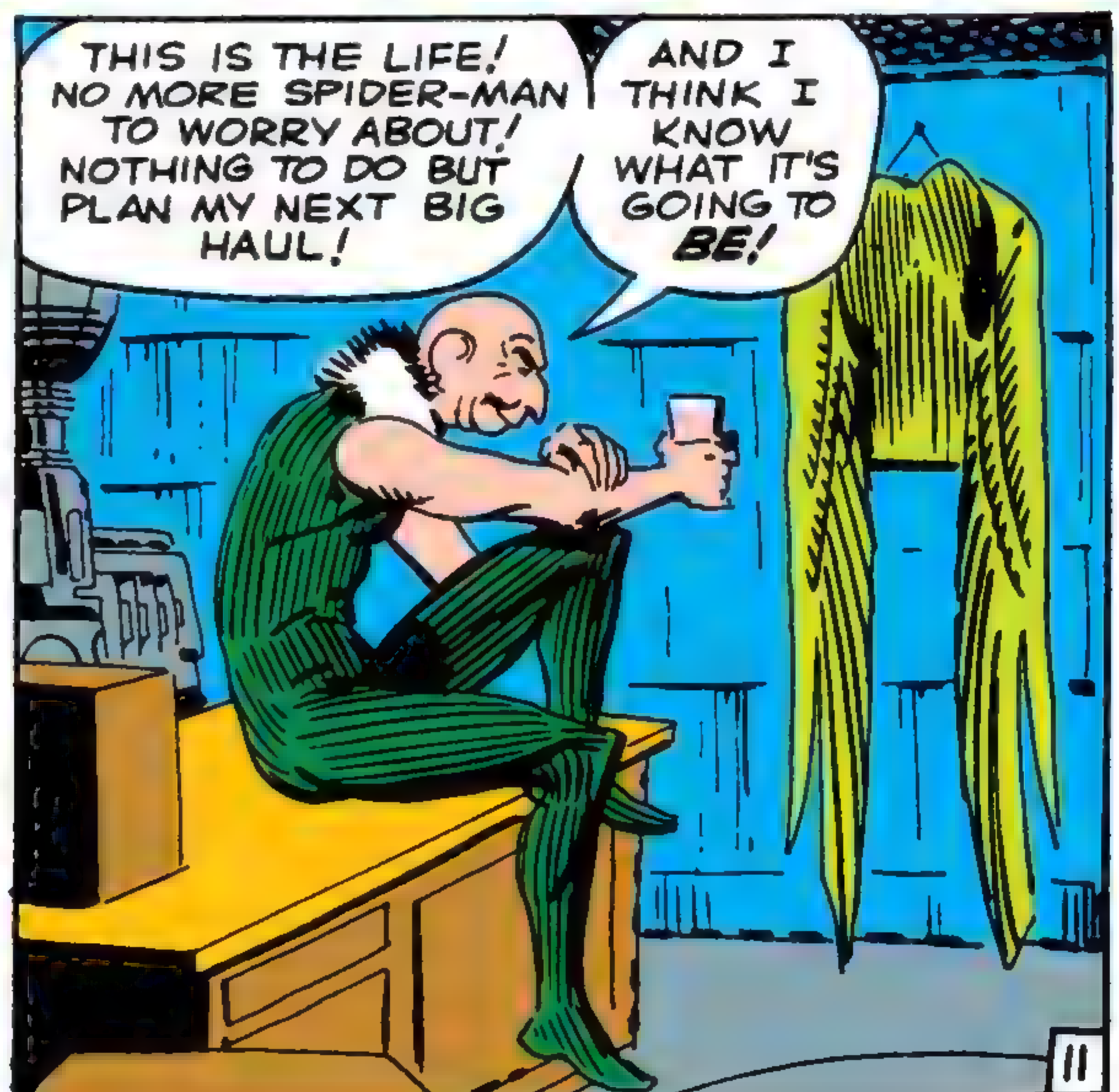
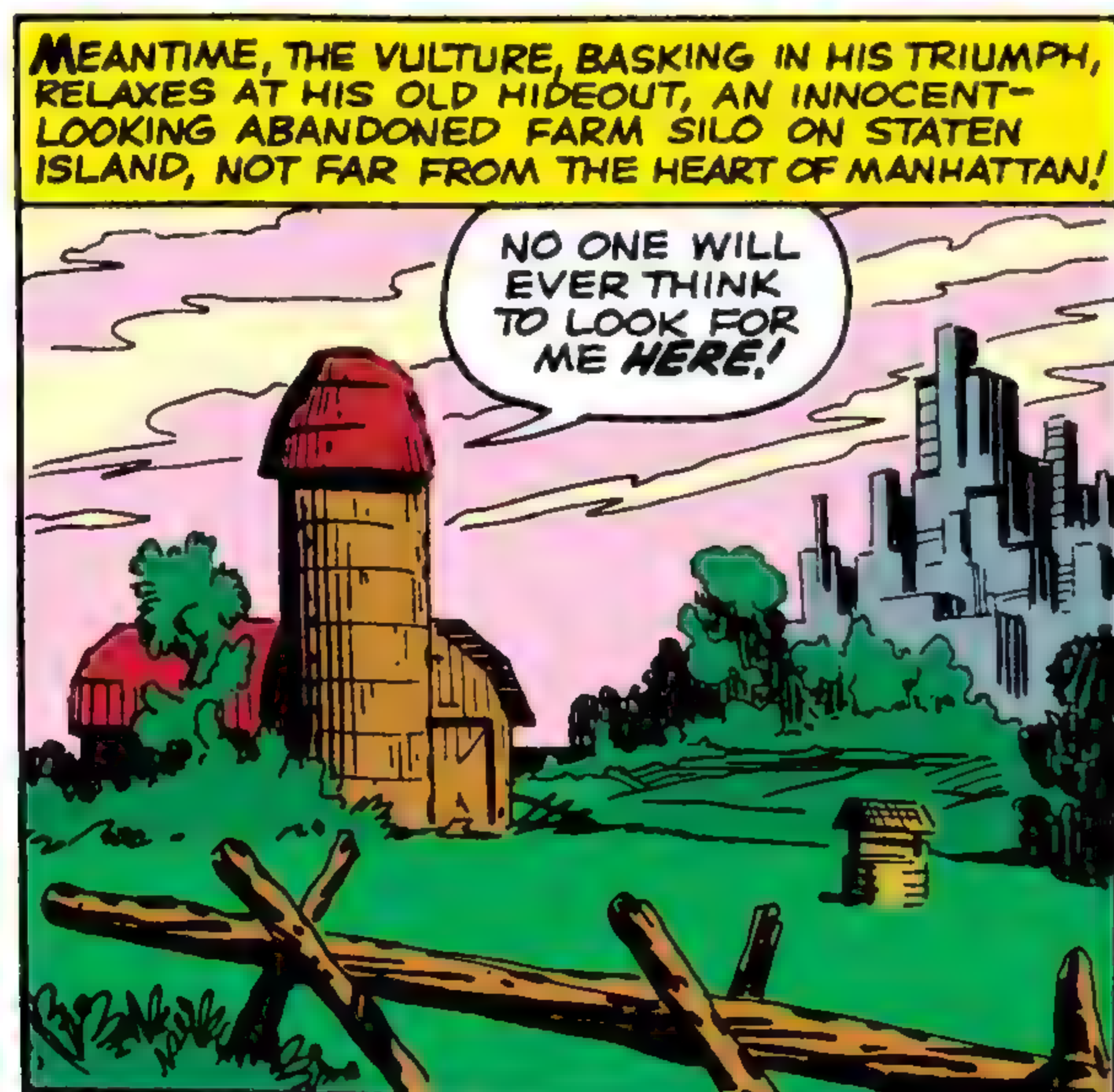
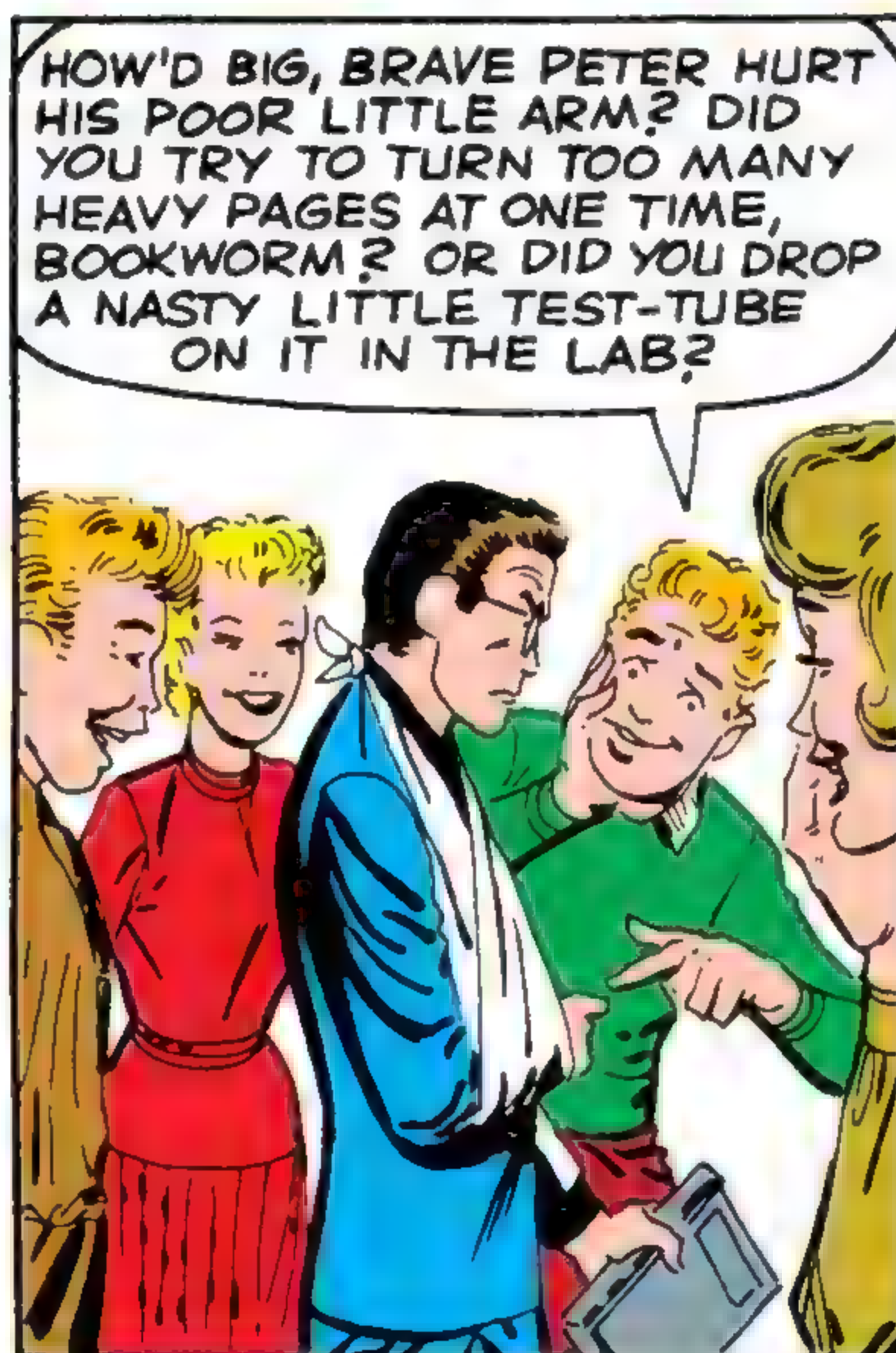
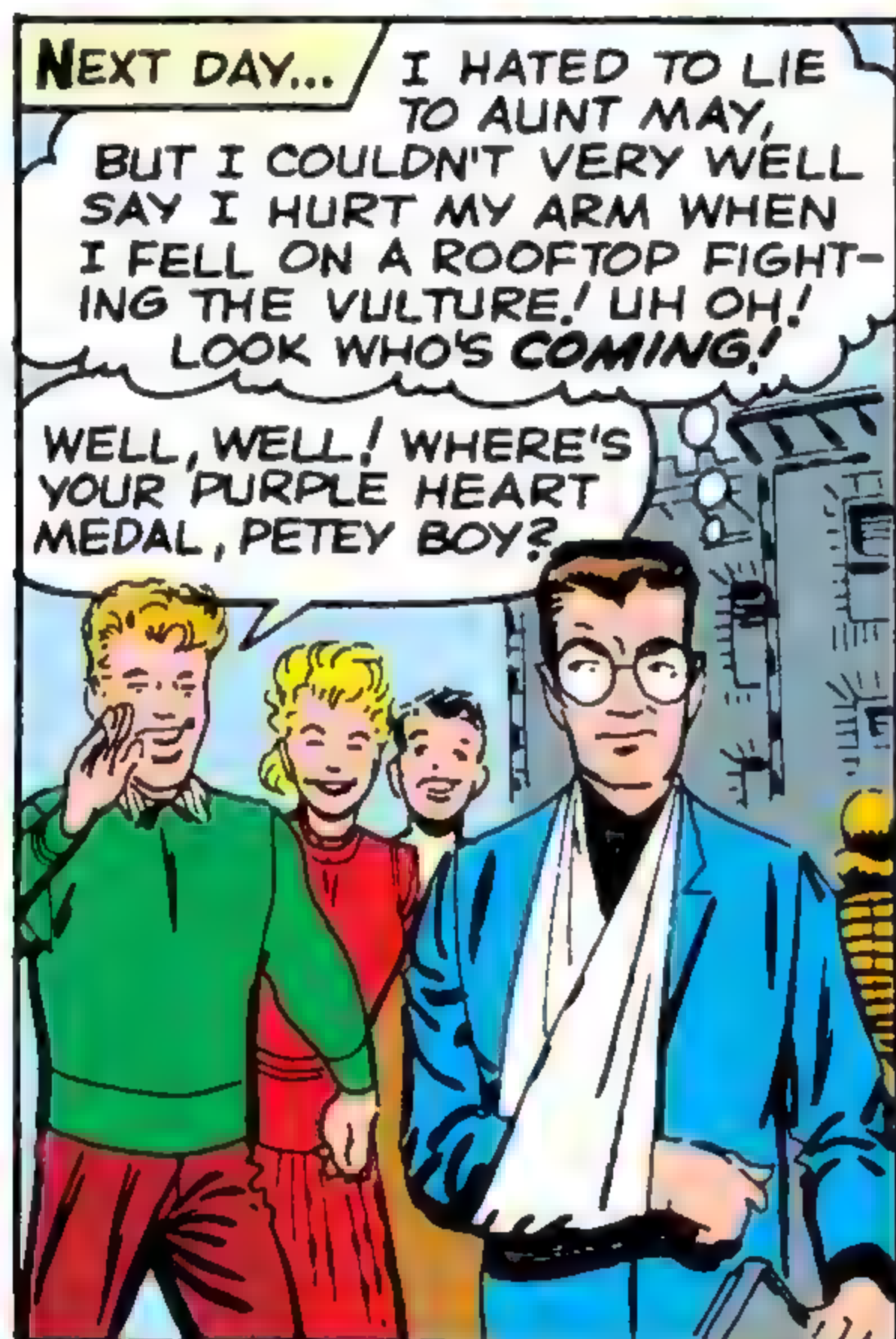
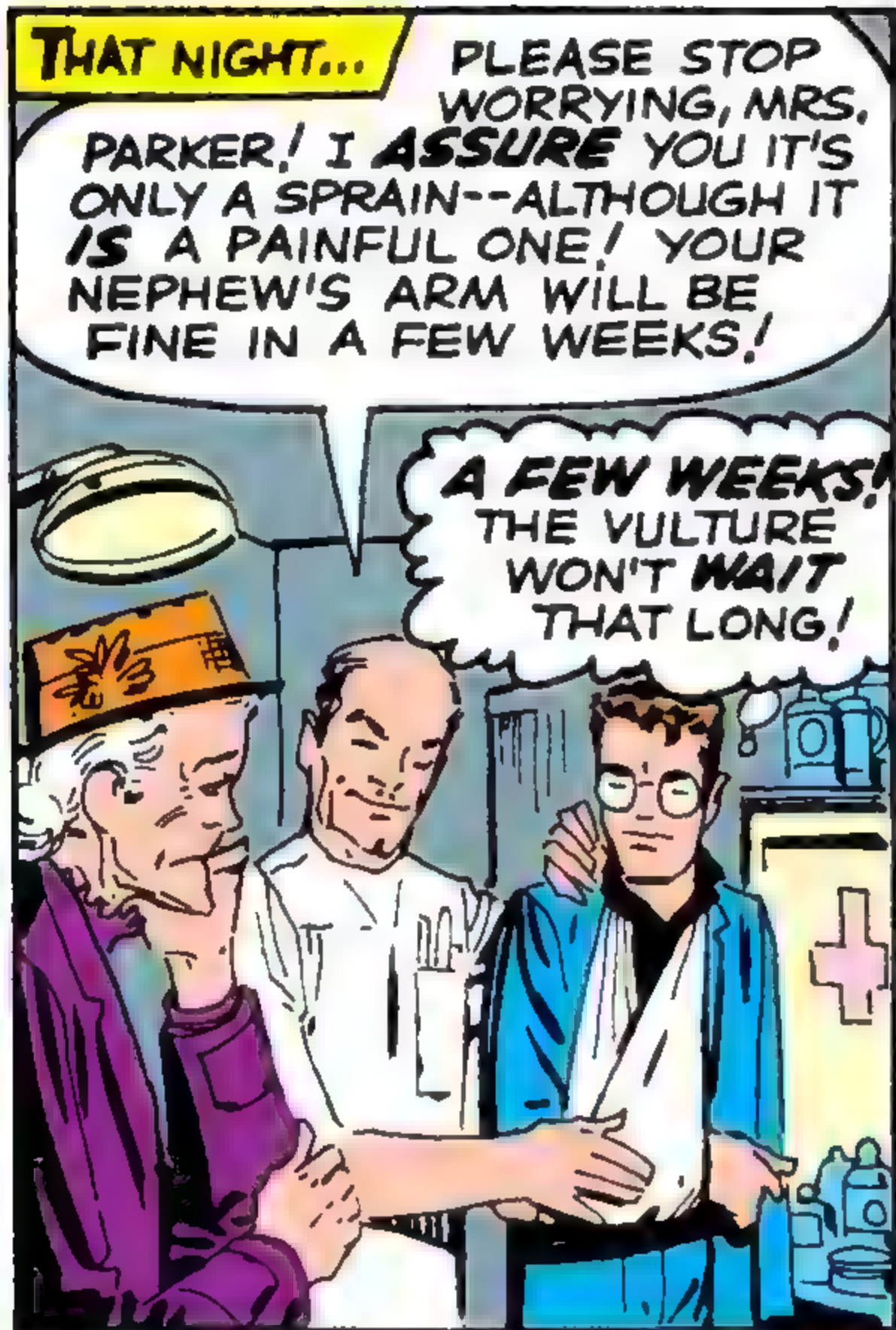


BOY! IT TOOK ALMOST A HALF HOUR TO CHANGE DUDS! I'M SURE NOT GONNA BREAK ANY SPEED RECORDS WITH THIS ARM OF MINE!



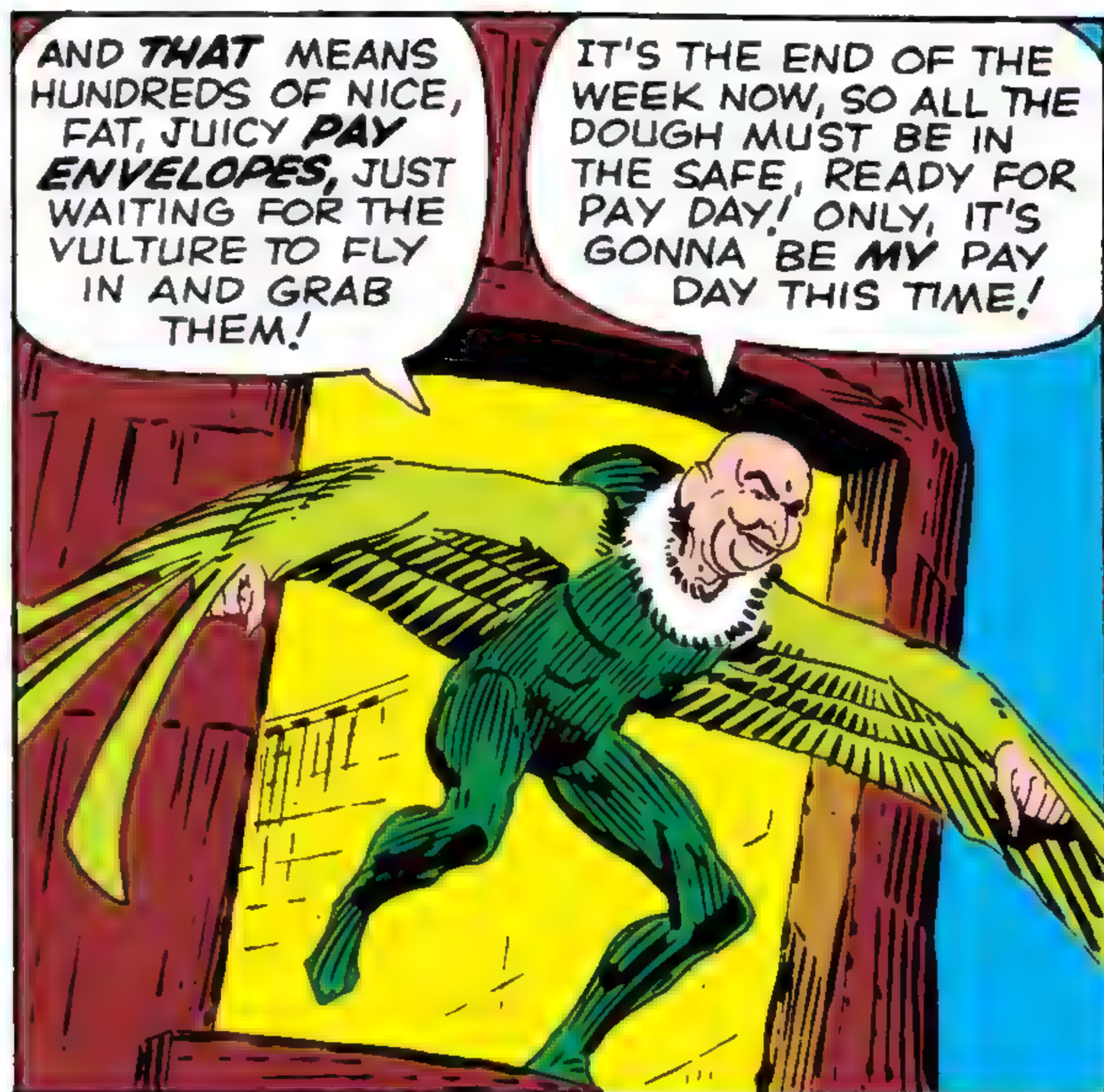
NOW TO SLIP OUT AND COME IN THE FRONT DOOR AS PETER PARKER! HOPE AUNT MAY WON'T MAKE A FEDERAL CASE OUT OF MY SPRAINED ARM!







ONE OF THE BIGGEST PAYROLLS IN NEW YORK IS AT THE OFFICE OF **J. JONAH JAMESON!** HE PUBLISHES THE "DAILY BUGLE" AND "NOW" MAGAZINE! HE MUST EMPLOY **HUNDREDS** OF WORKERS!



AND **THAT** MEANS HUNDREDS OF NICE, FAT, JUICY **PAY ENVELOPES**, JUST WAITING FOR THE VULTURE TO FLY IN AND GRAB THEM!

IT'S THE END OF THE WEEK NOW, SO ALL THE DOUGH MUST BE IN THE SAFE, READY FOR PAY DAY! ONLY, IT'S GONNA BE **MY** PAY DAY THIS TIME!



AND, AT THE OFFICES OF THE DAILY BUGLE, WE FIND YOUNG PETER PARKER, TALKING TO J. JONAH JAMESON'S SECRETARY...

OH, PETER, **NOBODY** COULD SPRAIN HIS ARM PLAYING VOLLEY BALL!

WHAT **REALLY** HAPPENED?

OKAY, I'LL TELL YOU THE **TRUTH**...



IT HAPPENED IN THE AIR, WHILE I WAS FIGHTING THE VULTURE FOR DEAR LIFE!

OH, WELL! ASK A SILLY QUESTION

SO LET'S STICK TO THE VOLLEY BALL STORY! OKAY?

MISS BRANT! SEND PARKER IN NOW!



I'LL **ADMIT** THAT'S A FINE PICTURE OF THE VULTURE, PARKER, BUT I CAN'T PAY MORE THAN TEN DOLLARS FOR IT! AFTER ALL, HE'S BEEN SEEN ALL OVER TOWN! **LOTS** OF PEOPLE HAVE SNAPPED HIM! I WANT SOMETHING **DIFFERENT!**



AW, COME ON, MR. JAMESON! **NOBODY'S** TAKEN A CLOSE-UP LIKE **THIS** BEFORE!

WELL... ALRIGHT! I'LL PAY TWELVE-FIFTY!

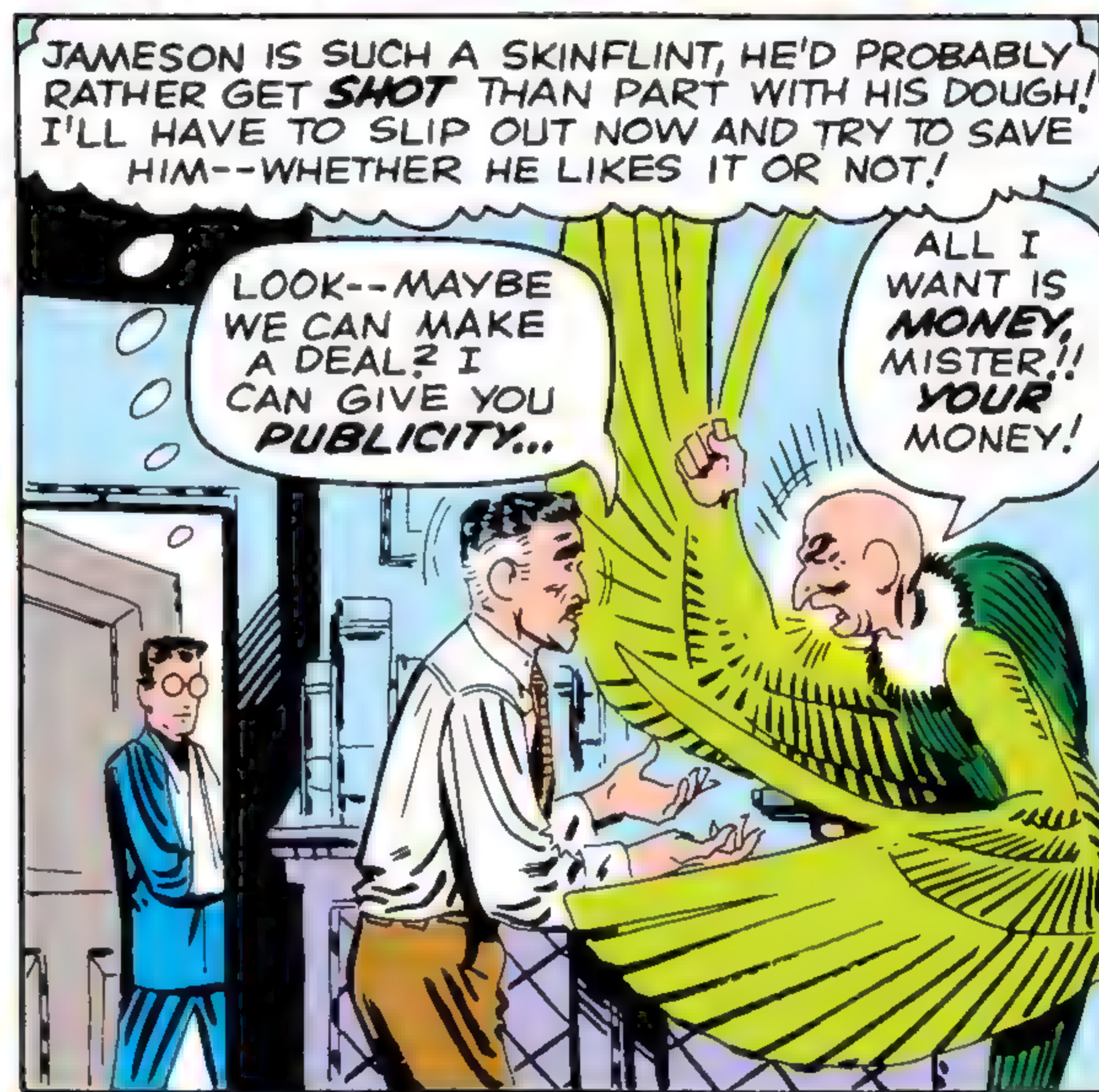
BETTER **SAVE** YOUR DOUGH, SUCKER! YOU'RE GONNA **NEED** IT!

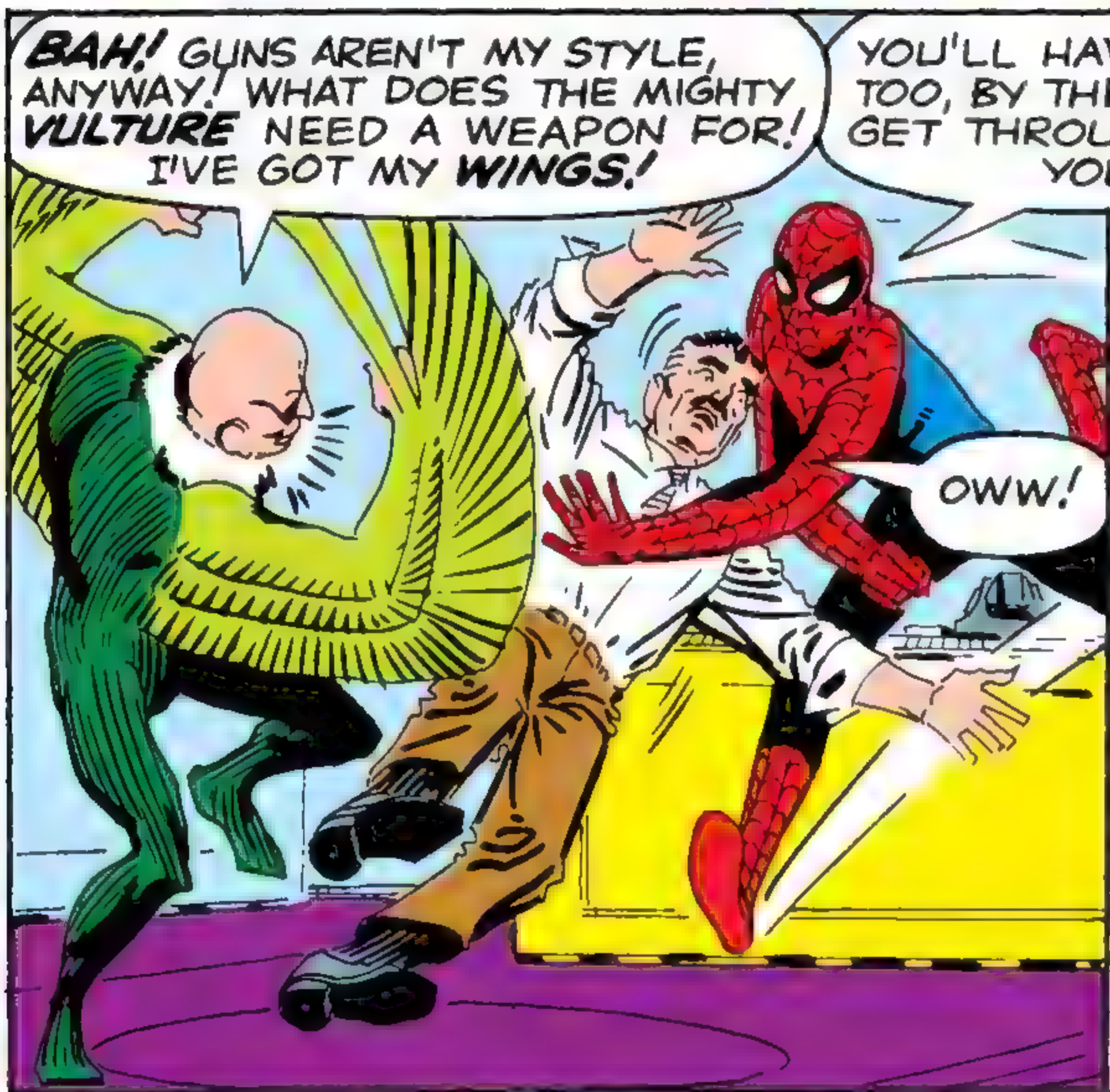
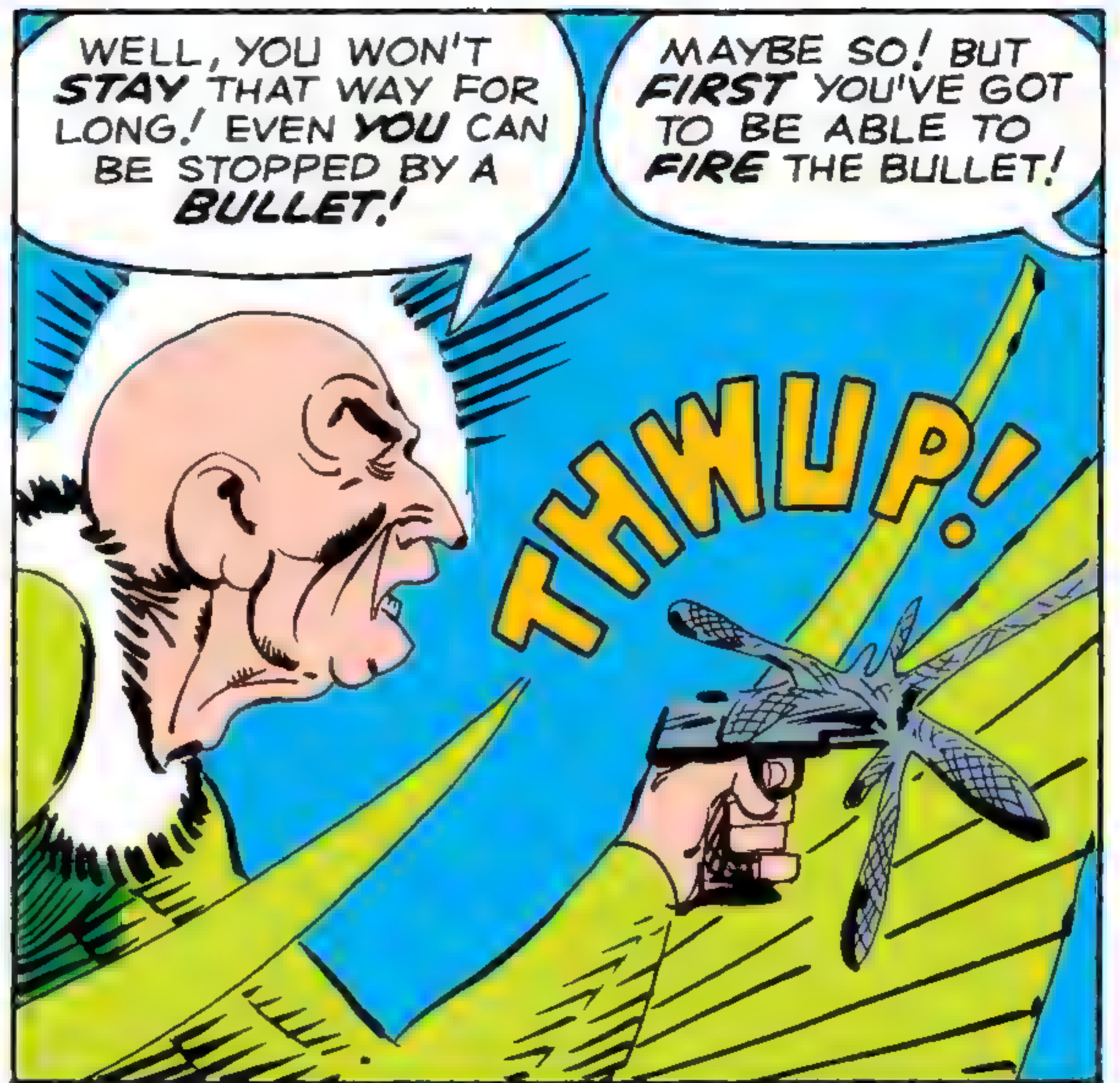


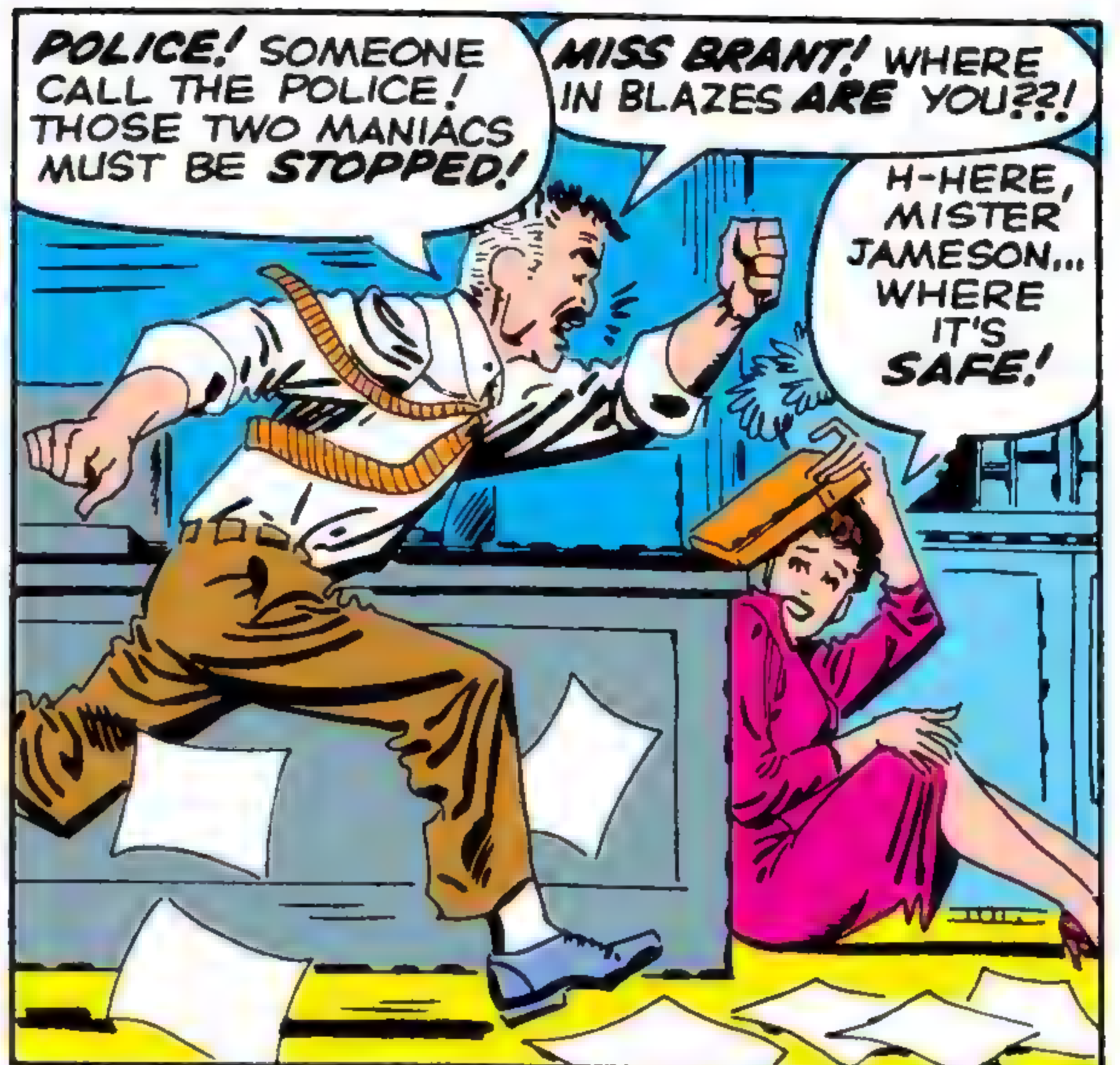
GREETINGS, JAMESON! IF YOU'LL PAY FOR A MERE **PHOTO** OF ME, WHAT WILL YOU GIVE FOR THE VULTURE IN THE **FLESH???**

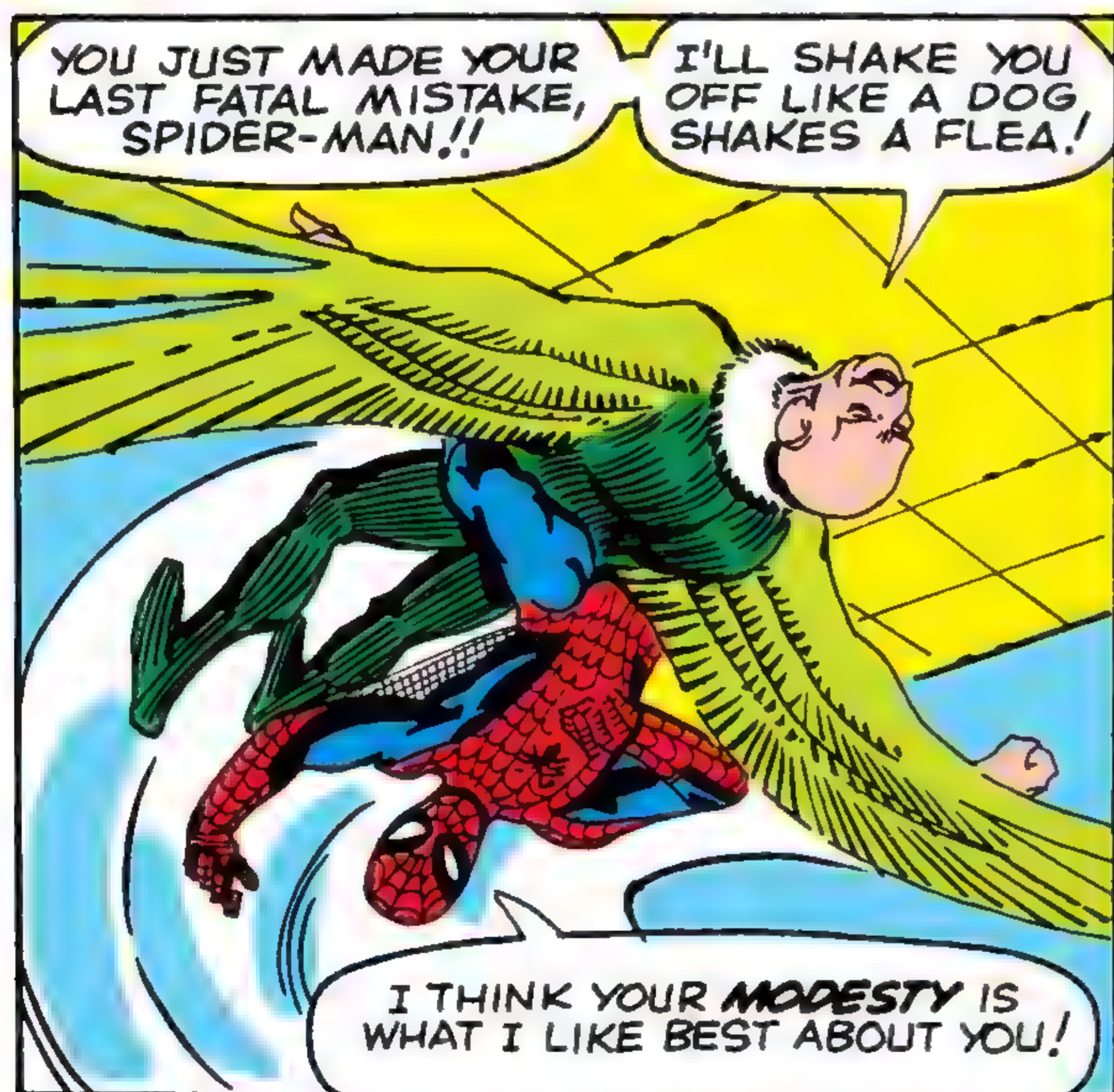
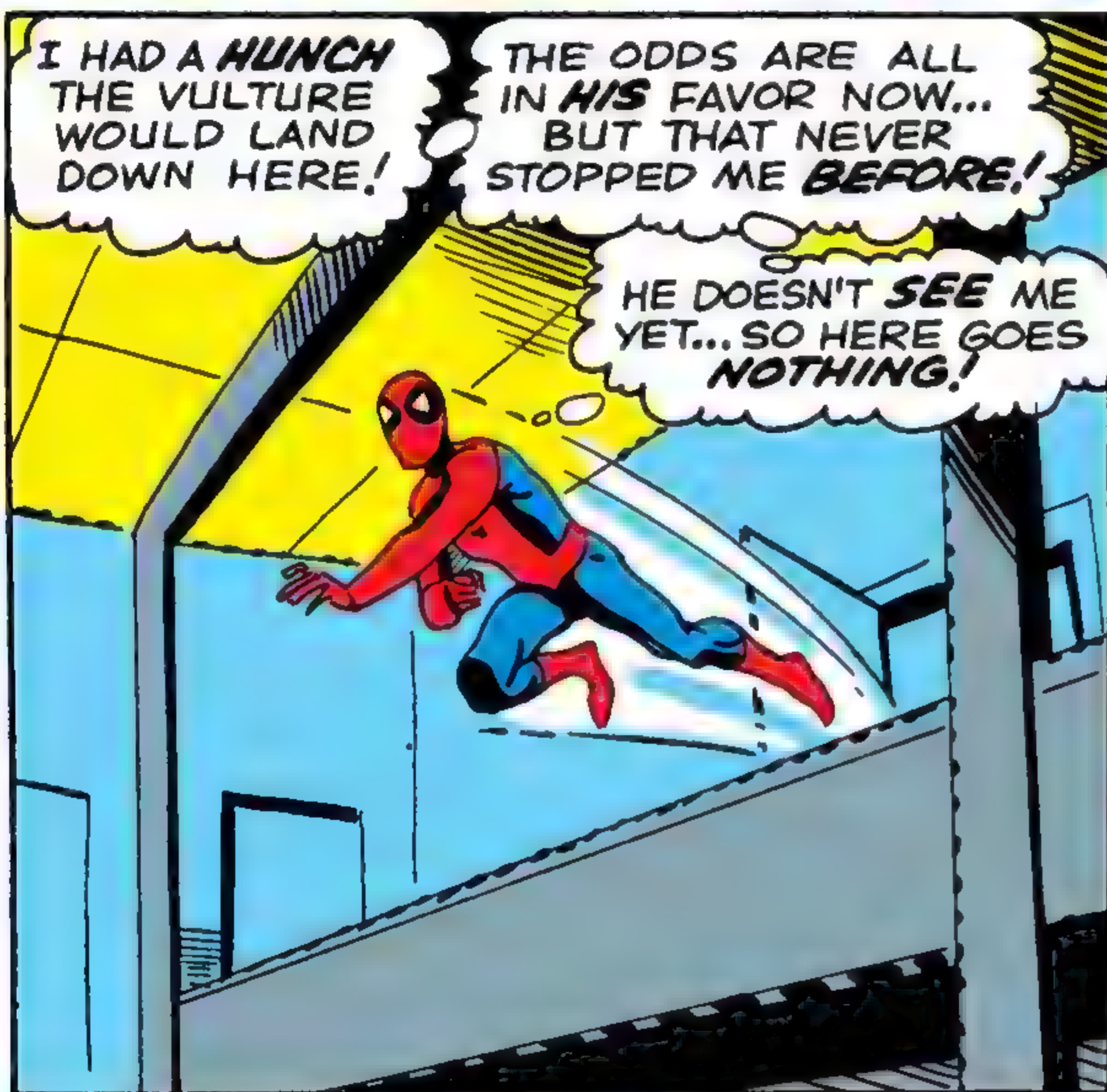
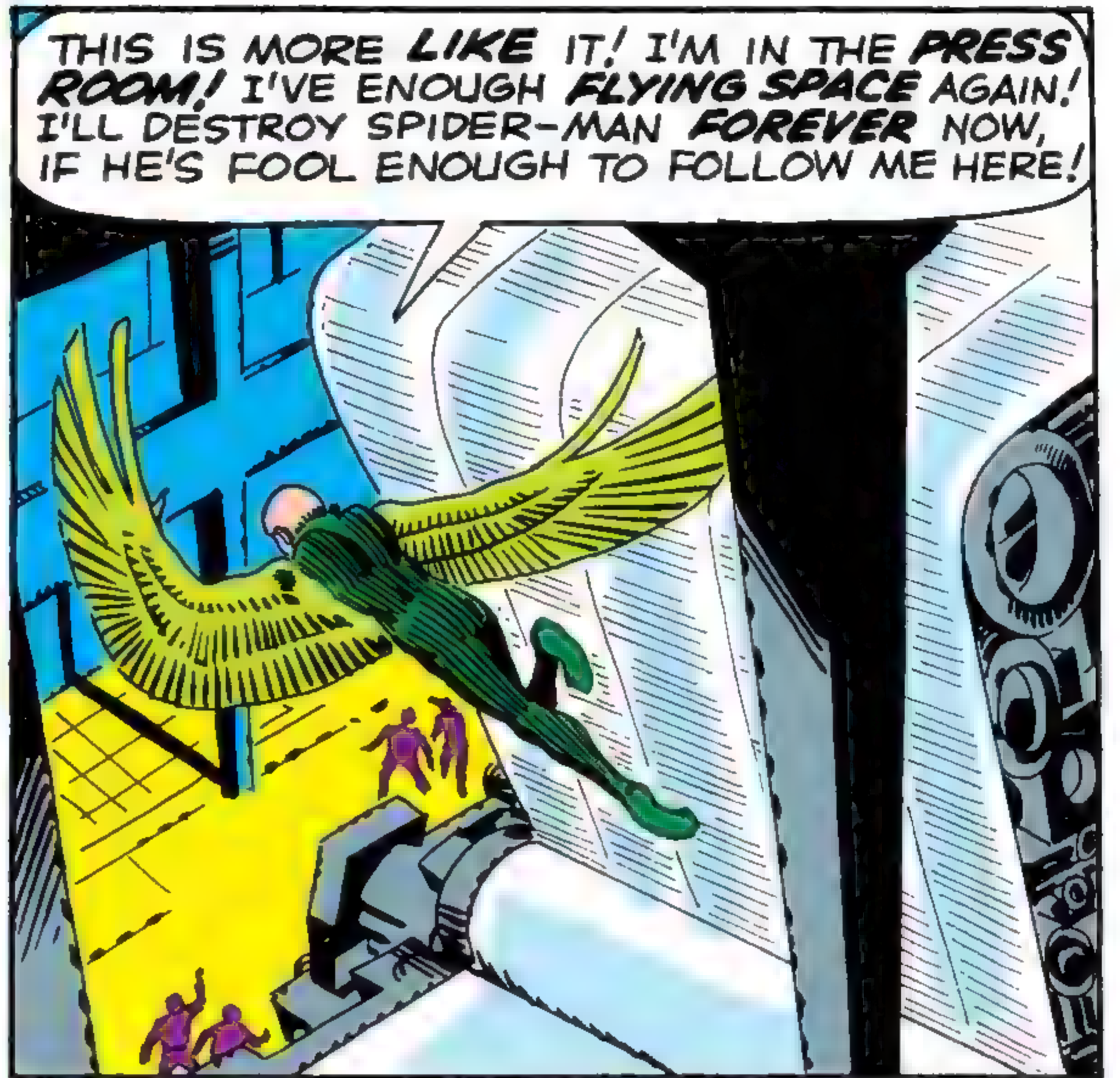
HOLY COW! IT'S **HIM!**

THE **VULTURE!!**









SUDDENLY, THE AGILE VULTURE CHANGES DIRECTION, AND ZOOMS UP TO THE CEILING WITH TELLING EFFECT...



WHAM!

OH!! MY ARM!!

PAIN IS TOO GREAT!! C-CAN'T HOLD ON!!

HAH! I CAUGHT YOU OFF-GUARD!



IF I HIT THOSE GIANT ROLLERS, I'M DONE FOR!

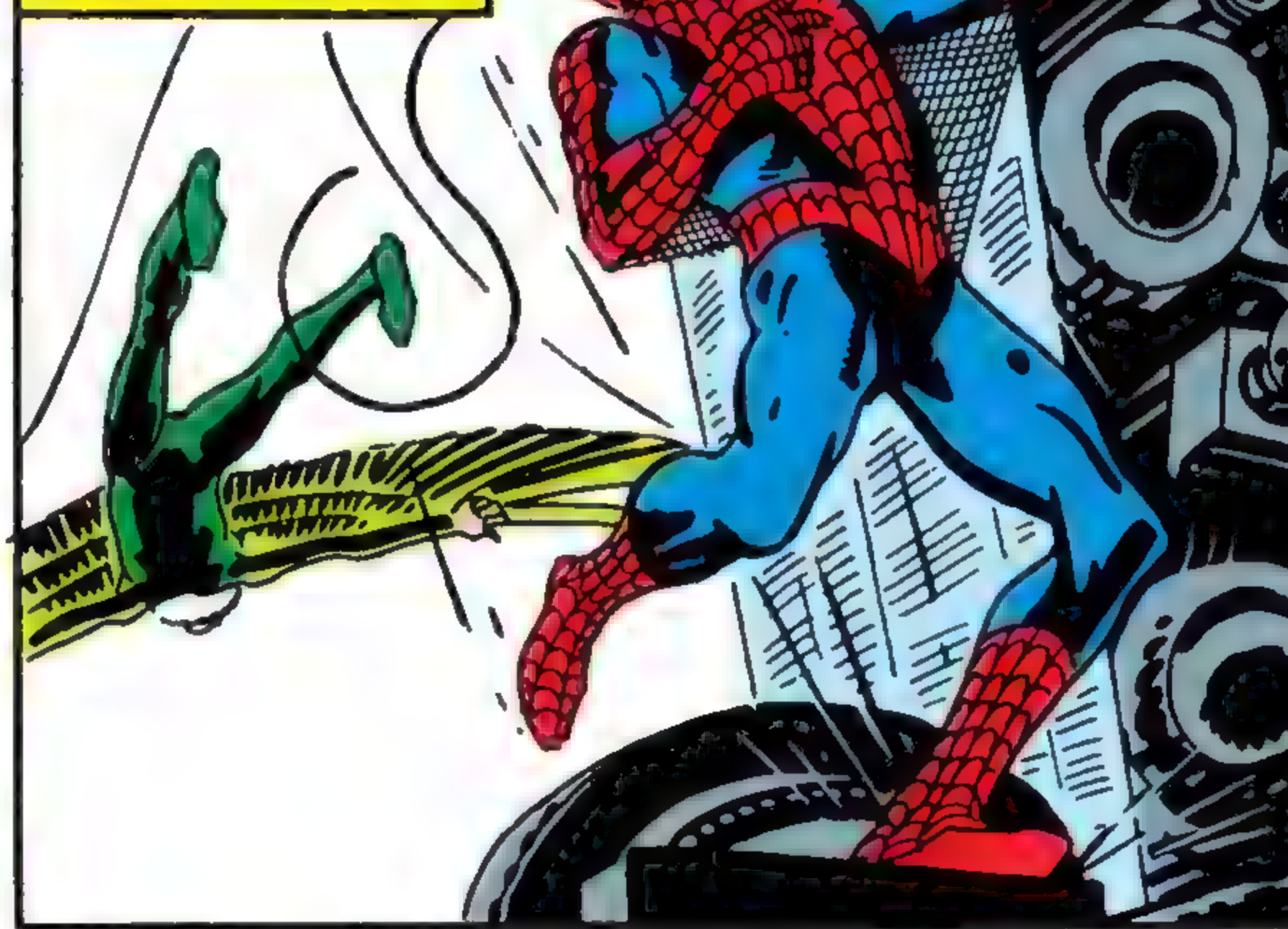
MY WEB HAS TO SAVE ME NOW... THIS TIME THERE'LL BE NO SECOND CHANCE!

MADE IT! NOW TO DESCEND SLOWLY, AND... OH NO! THE VULTURE IS CUTTING MY LIFE-SAVING STRAND!!



I HAD A HUNCH YOU'D TRY THAT, SPIDER-MAN!

BUT, WHILE DANGLING ABOVE, THE COLORFUL TEEN-AGER HAS TIME ENOUGH TO ESTIMATE THE DISTANCE... AND, WITH ONE MIGHTY LEAP...



WHEW! THAT WAS A CLOSE ONE!

GOT TO REACH THE VULTURE BEFORE HE FLIES OUT OF RANGE!!

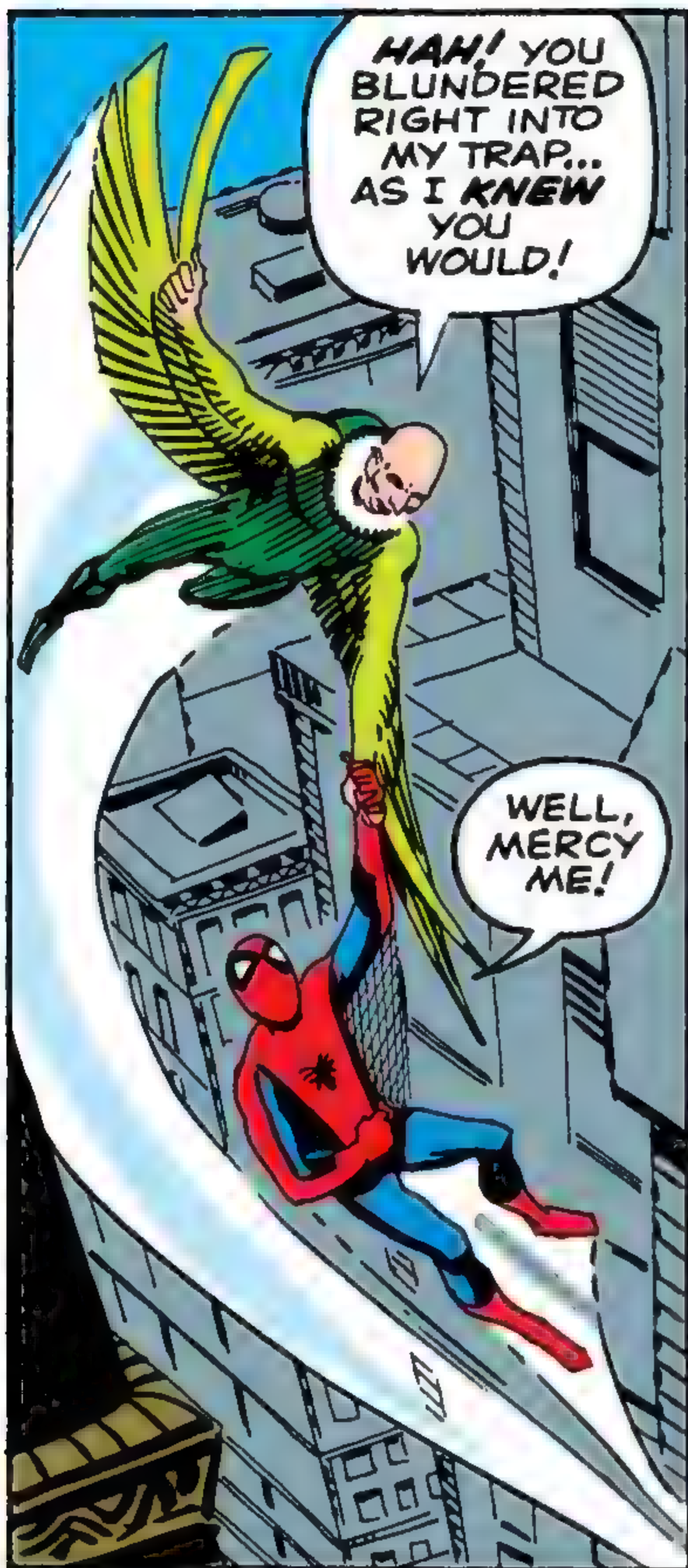


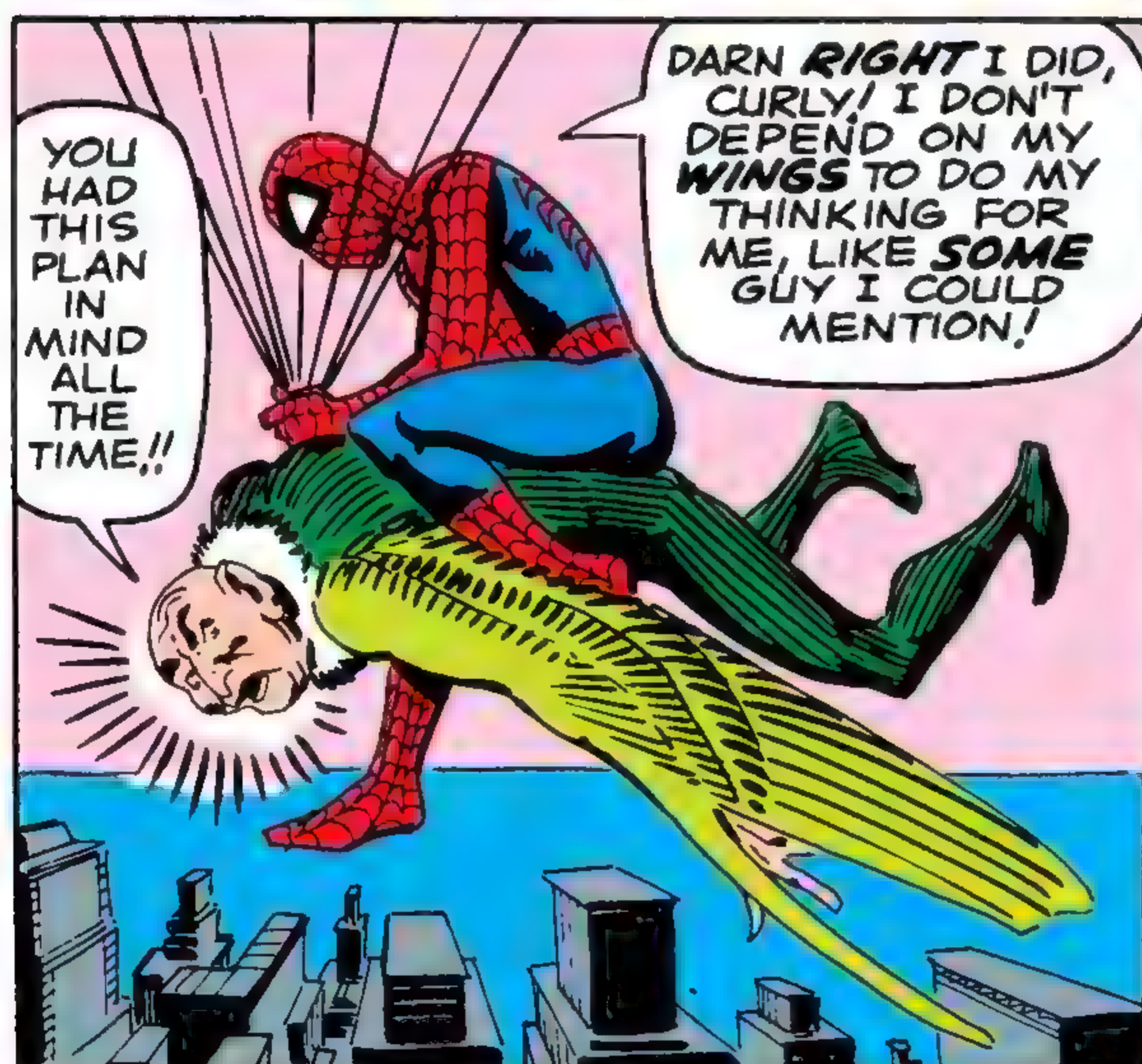
BUT HOW??!

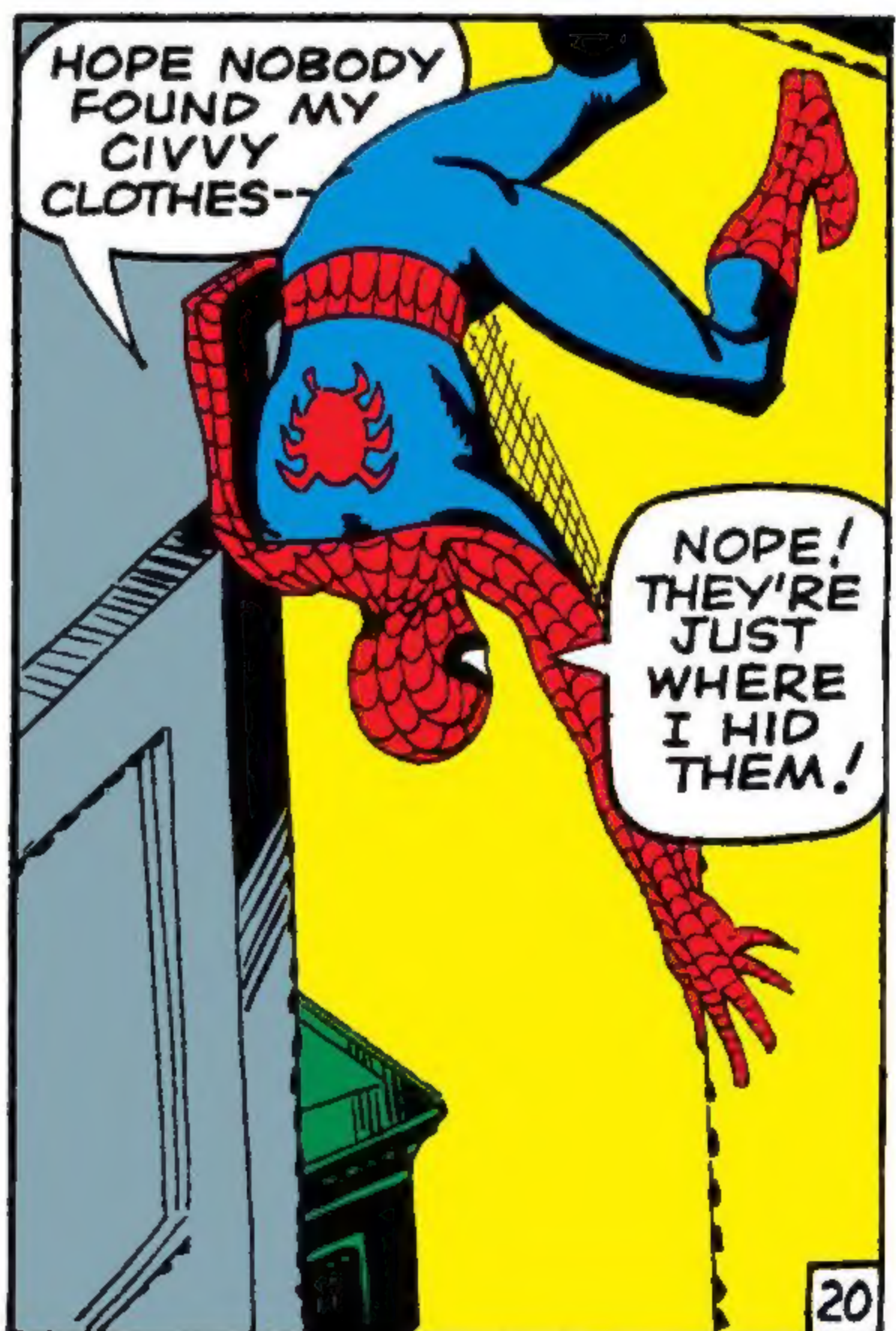
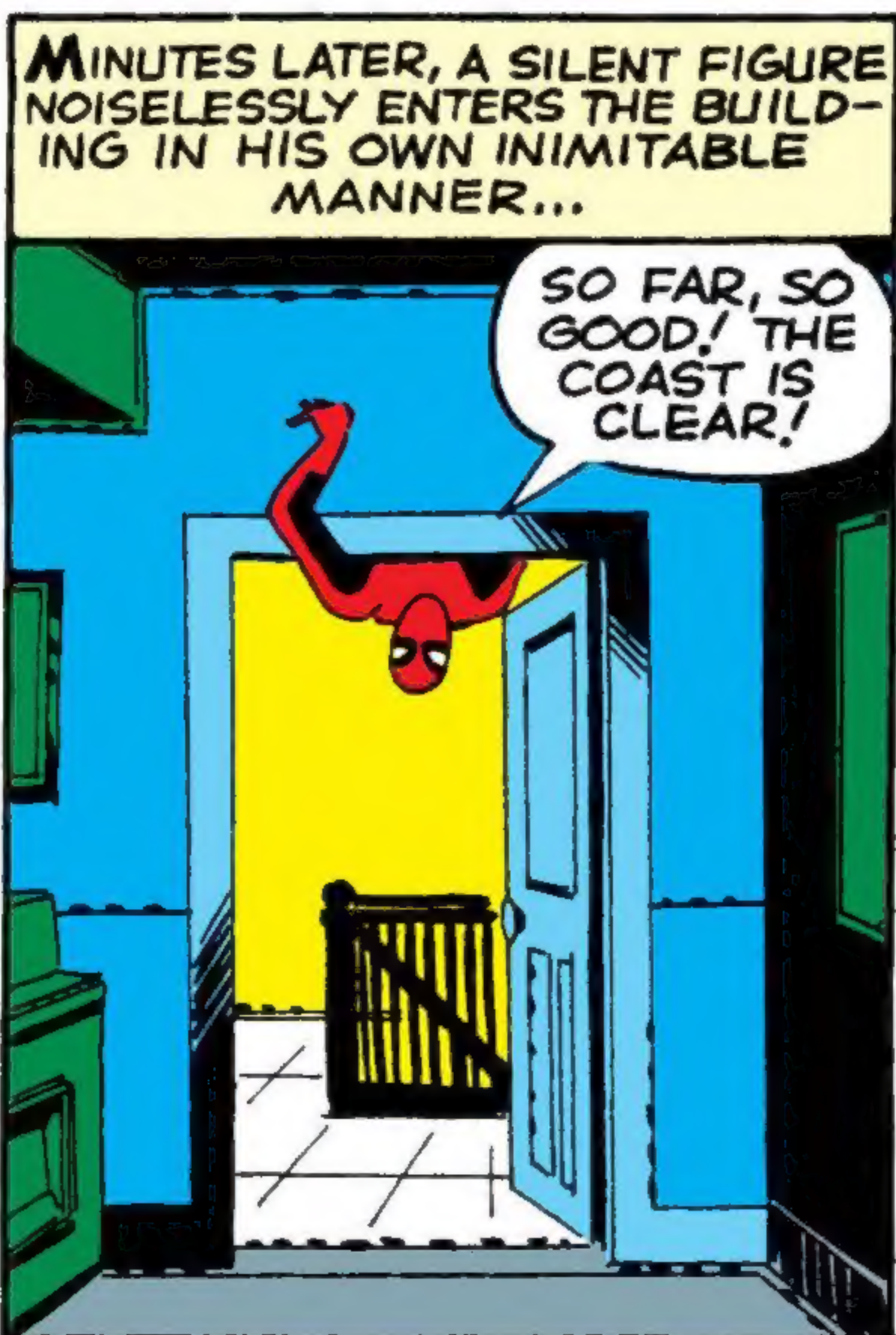
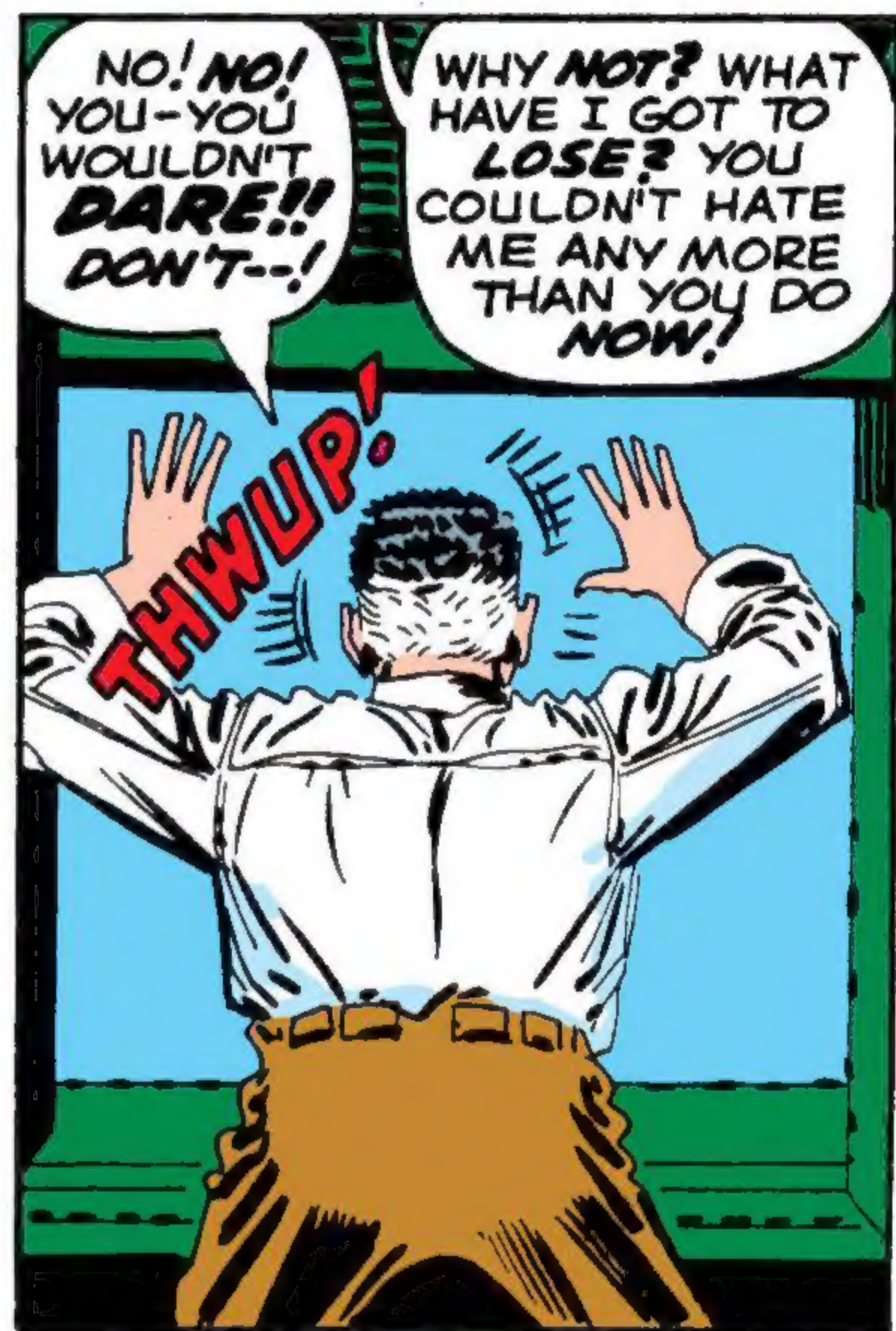
UH OH! MY SPIDER SENSE WARNS ME HE'S WAITING ABOVE! IT'S A TRAP!



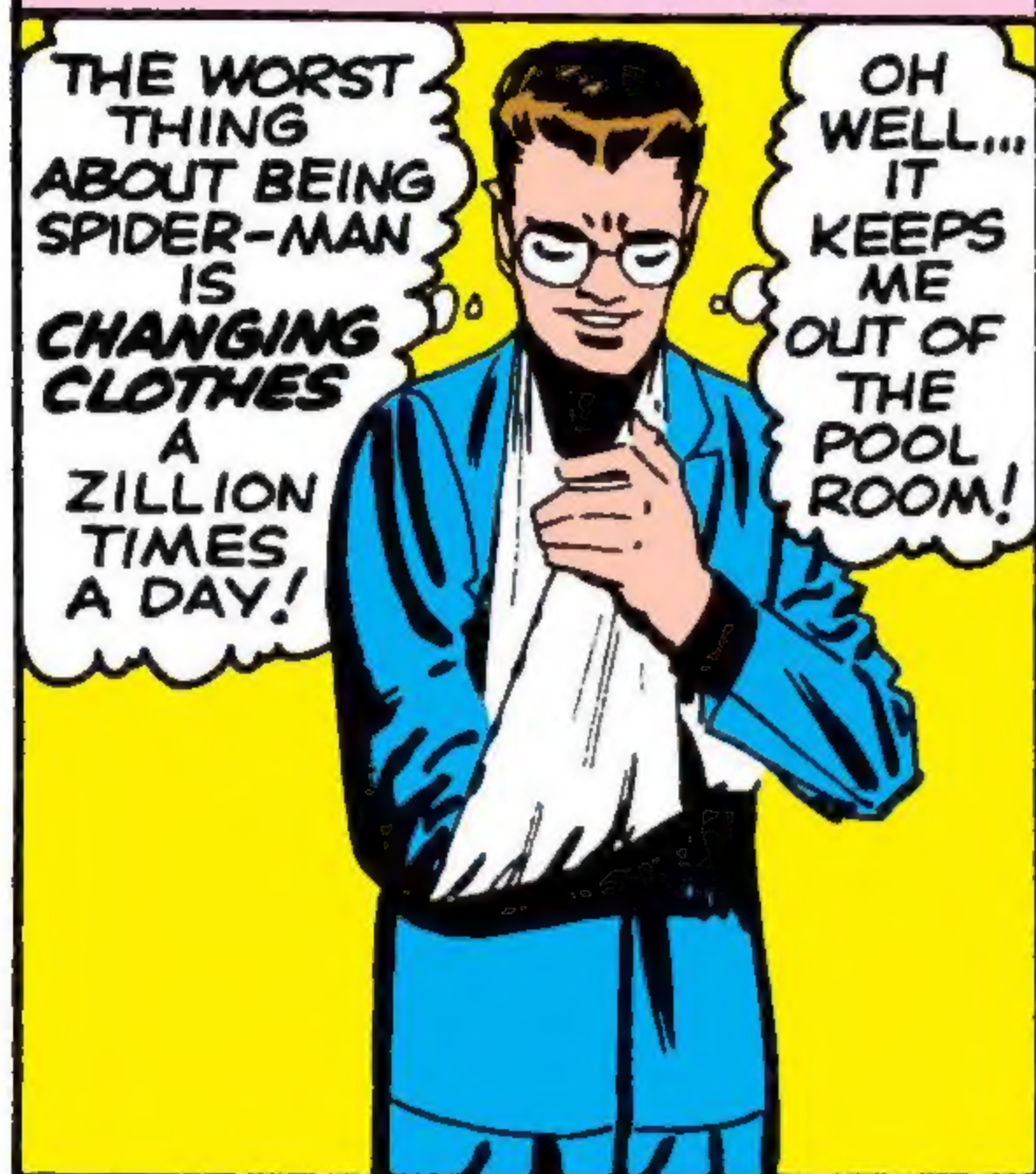
BUT I'LL LET HIM SPRING IT!







AND, WITHIN SECONDS, THE AMAZING **SPIDER-MAN** VANISHES, TO BE REPLACED BY A SLING-WEARING, INNOCENT-LOOKING PETER PARKER!



THE WORST THING ABOUT BEING SPIDER-MAN IS **CHANGING CLOTHES** A ZILLION TIMES A DAY!

OH WELL... IT KEEPS ME OUT OF THE POOL ROOM!



HI, BETTY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING BEHIND THAT **DESK**?

IT'S THE ONLY SAFE PLACE, PETER! THIS OFFICE WAS A **MADHOUSE** A FEW MINUTES AGO!



MIND IF I **JOIN** YOU?

BE MY GUEST!



BY THE WAY, WHERE WERE **YOU** WHILE SPIDER-MAN WAS BATTLING THE VULTURE?

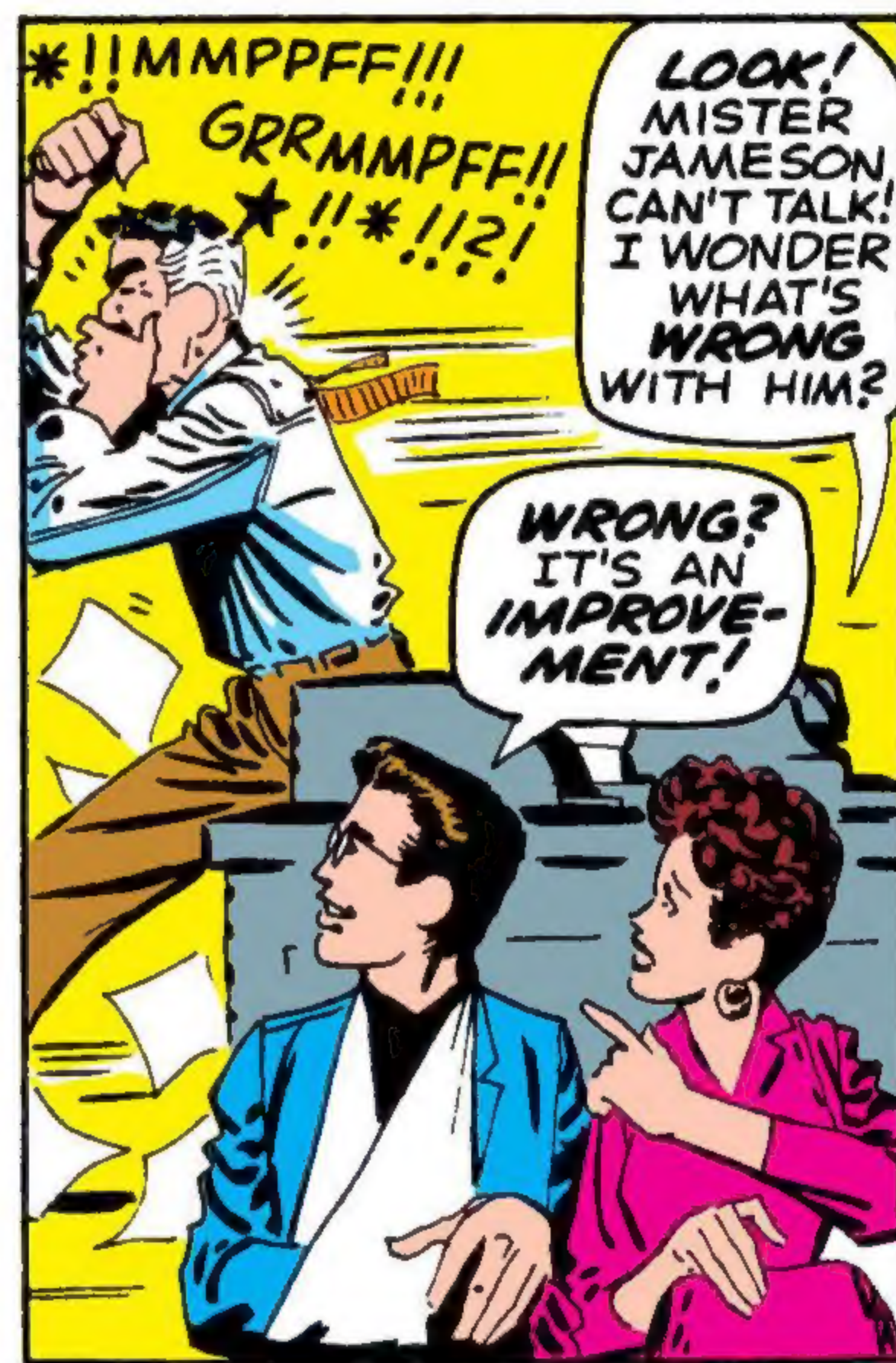
ME? OH... I WAS HIDING IN A **CLOSET**!



I'M AFRAID I'M JUST NOT THE **HEROIC** TYPE!

NEITHER AM I! MAYBE THAT'S WHY I **LIKE** YOU SO MUCH, PETER! AT LEAST, YOU DON'T PRETEND TO BE WHAT YOU'RE NOT!

BOY! IF SHE ONLY **KNEW**!!



*!!MMPFF!!
GRRMPPFF!!
!!!!*!!

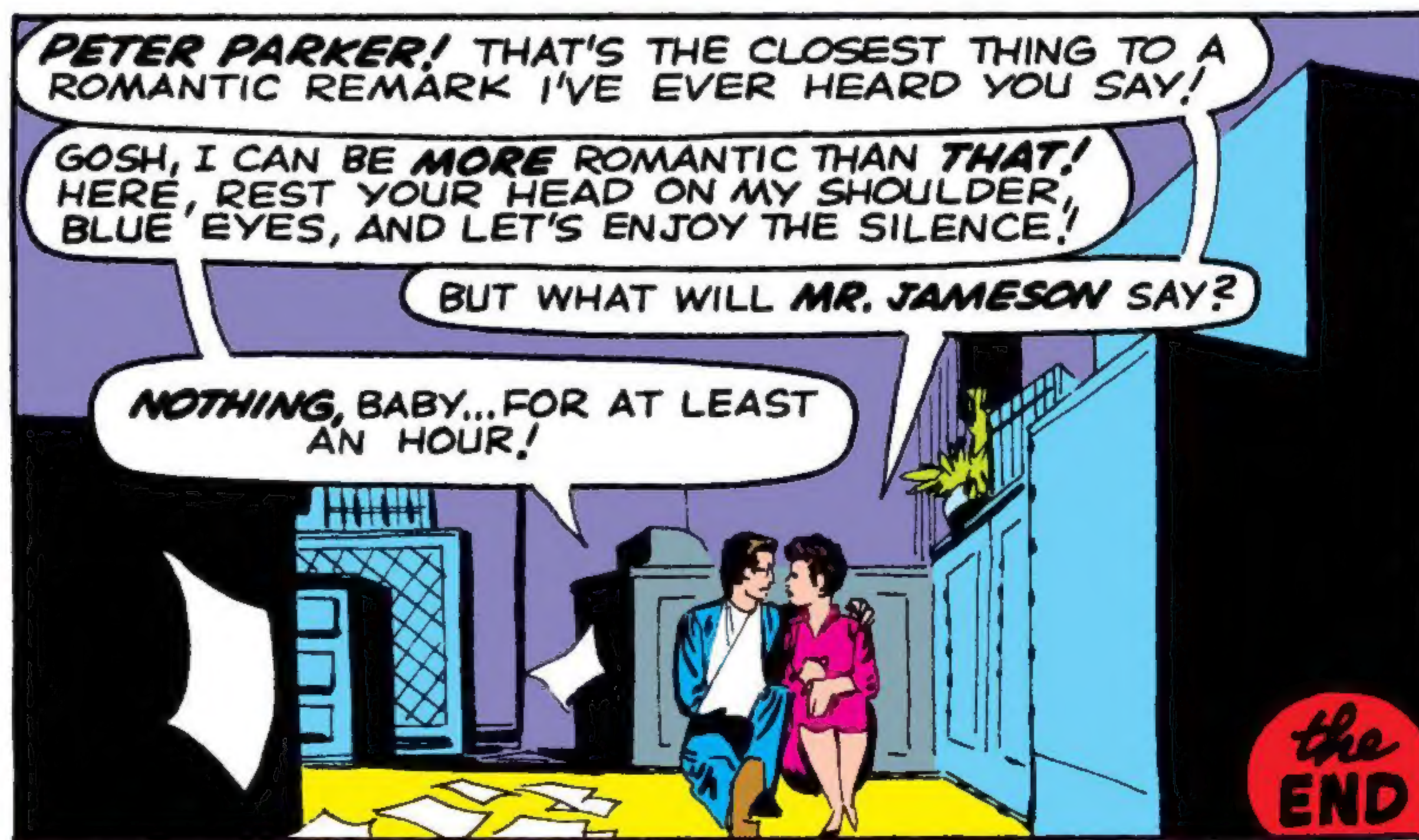
LOOK! MISTER JAMESON CAN'T TALK! I WONDER WHAT'S **WRONG** WITH HIM?

WRONG? IT'S AN **IMPROVE-MENT**!



PETER, SOMETIMES I GET THE FEELING THAT YOU'RE LAUGHING AT A SECRET LITTLE JOKE THAT'S ALL YOUR OWN!

IF YOU KEEP USING THAT **COOL PERFUME**, BETTY, I MAY BREAK DOWN AND **TELL** YOU ABOUT IT SOME DAY!



PETER PARKER! THAT'S THE CLOSEST THING TO A ROMANTIC REMARK I'VE EVER HEARD YOU SAY!

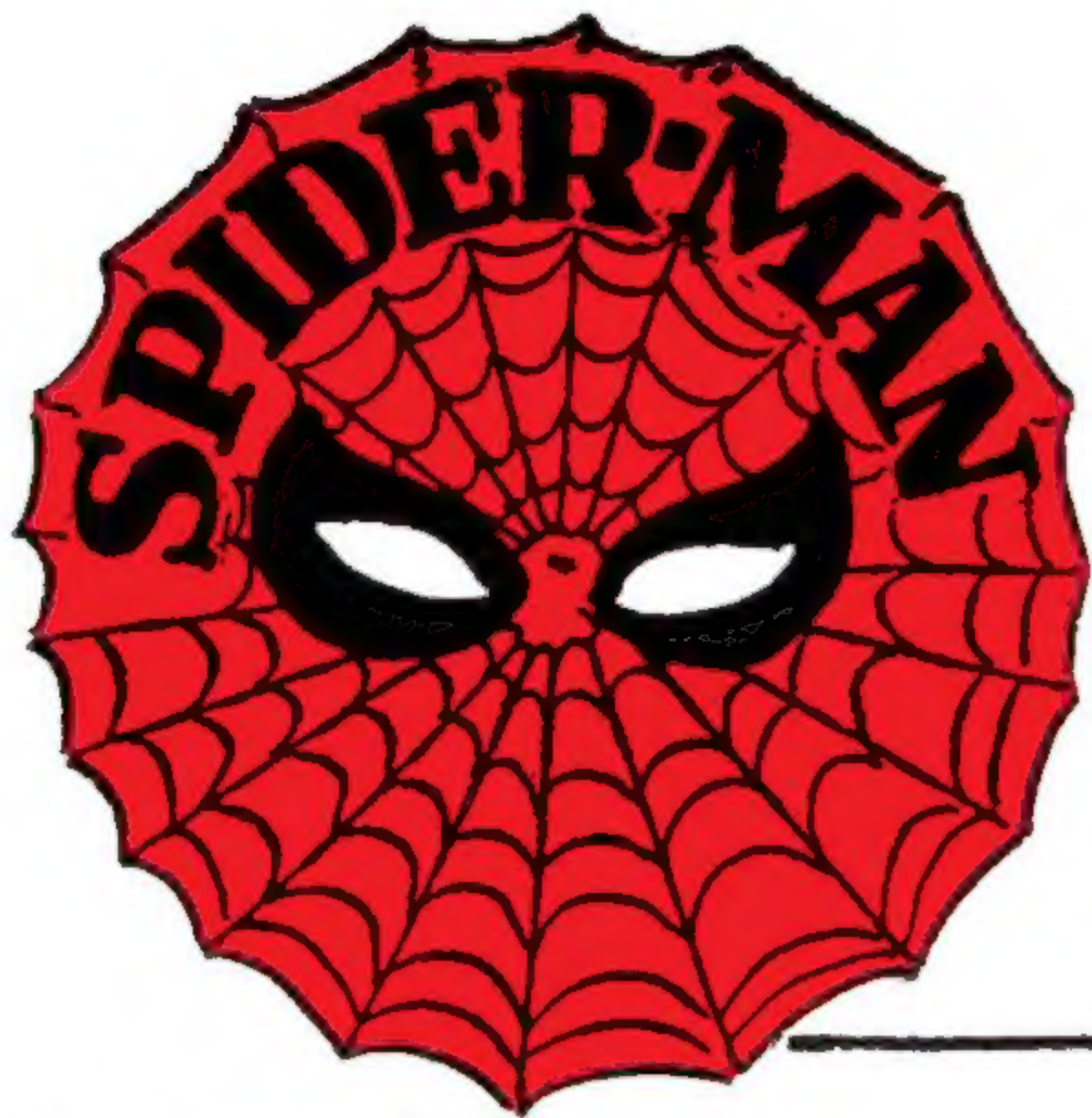
GOSH, I CAN BE **MORE** ROMANTIC THAN **THAT**! HERE, REST YOUR HEAD ON MY SHOULDER, BLUE EYES, AND LET'S ENJOY THE SILENCE!

BUT WHAT WILL **MR. JAMESON** SAY?

NOTHING, BABY...FOR AT LEAST AN HOUR!

the END

WE ADMIT IT! THIS ISN'T A TYPICAL ENDING FOR A TYPICAL SUPER-HERO TALE! BUT, WE'VE NEVER CLAIMED THAT SPIDER-MAN WAS A TYPICAL SUPER-HERO! IN FACT, **NEXT** ISSUE, HE DOES SOME **VERY** UNTYPICAL THINGS! BUT, SEE FOR YOURSELF WHEN WE MEET AGAIN!



SPIDER'S WEB

Dear Stan and Steve,

"Nothing Can Stop the Sandman" was more than a well-written, well-drawn story of a battle between a super-hero and a super-villain. It was, in my humble opinion, the most reasonable account ever written of a day in the life of a super-hero. His problems, his triumphs, and his thoughts were all covered thoroughly in your story. Although Peter Parker's bizarre costume makes him appear bigger than life (which after all is its purpose beside hiding his identity), this story carefully painted a picture of a teenager with super abilities wondering if they are really a gift. Other episodes like his problems with the torn mask, J. J. Jameson's hate for him, and his girl troubles all made for the best portrait of a super-hero's life ever written. I could hardly help feeling I actually knew Spider-Man personally. Of course, Sandman was an ingenious villain. His simple powers were just perfect and proved a match for Spider-Man. Continue Spider-Man in his present vein and he will run till, as you say, "Peter Parker picks a peck of pickled peppers."

Joe Finley
Route 4
Sparta, Tenn.

Didn't anyone ever tell you, Joe—if you can't say something NICE about a fella, don't say anything! But seriously, if we're half as good as you imply, then we're twice as pleased as you!

Dear Stan and Steve,

I think Peter Parker should have a girl friend who sticks up for him when he's being bullied; and I don't mean some chick who's homely, wears specs and a sack dress, with black-and-white saddle shoes, or is as science-minded as he is. I mean a doll with a good figure, get-up-and-go, who digs jazz and rock-and-roll. You follow me?

Sidney Wright
Worcester, Mass.

No, Sid, but we'd sure follow HER!

Dear Stan and Steve,

May I congratulate you (or should it be thank you) for the tremendous quality of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. Originally, (meaning AMAZING FANTASY #15) he was a run-of-the-mill deadbeat, typical of the baleful boredom which sometimes prevailed in your comics. The Ditko art, pitifully primitive, lacked imagination, and made one believe that Steve was a doting, senile old codger who you kept on your staff because you didn't have the heart to fire him. But no longer! The plots now ring with originality, and the villains are as vibrant as life. And Ditko — now I picture him as a lively, eager 25 year old! His SPIDER-MAN is one of the best heroes today. No longer does Steve have the same ol' faces in each story gazing toward the rest of an empty panel. He's helped most of all to bring the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN right up to the top of the MARVEL COMICS GROUP — some people now put him over the fabulous FANTASTIC FOUR (folks in fandom that is) and the brilliant SGT. FURY! And it's not the same old Stan Lee either — whose claims of "We're superior! We're different! We're the best! We're too great for words!" were trying to promote his own work (sort of like most of your competitors). I don't know if their stuff has deteriorated or whether you have improved that

much, but the competition now seems like echh! Each person in the plot(s) is a complete world, down to the bow tie and personality. Wow — now that I've cleared my head, I know what I should have said at the beginning — may I thank you for the tremendous quality of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!

Paul Gambaccini
8 Elizabeth Drive
Westport, Conn.

We appreciate your praise, Paul, but feel we must pause for a serious word to you, and all of fandom. We don't feel it's fair for you to knock any other group of magazines while boosting ours. After all, it's just a matter of taste—and there are probably many fans who prefer our competitors' mags to ours. There are many fine talents producing well-written and well-drawn stories at other houses beside MARVEL. While we admit we try to create the greatest comics possible, we feel it isn't proper to comment about mags other than our own on these pages. Okay?

Dear Stan and Steve,

I just got issue #4 of the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, and it is the greatest of all the Spider-Man issues. Sandman is the best villain he has ever fought. I think the word "Amazing" should be left on the title of the comic, for I think it is a part of the title, and Spider-Man is amazing. I would like to see Spider-Man talking with the spiders like the Ant-Man does with ants, and the Wasp does with the wasps.

Larry Rothenberger
906 Jackson St.
Wausau, Wisconsin

And we suppose you'd like to see IRON MAN talking with pieces of IRON? Oh well, as usual, we'll wait for the comments from our fans out there in mag-land!

SPIDER SCRATCHINGS:

(Due to lack of space, we can't print these letters in their entirety, but we try to include as many interesting comments as we can.)

"You ought to have Spider-Man in the army or navy helping them."—Zane Smith, Carthage, Mo. . . . "Your July issue of Spider-Man was so good that I had to write or explode."—Marshall Barroll, Chestertown, Md. . . . "The F.F. will be sorry they turned down Spider-Man when he wanted to join up!"—Herbie Clayburn, Jr., N. Y. C., N. Y. . . . "Dr. Octopus has just got to make a comeback."—Leonard Tirado, Brooklyn, N. Y. . . . "Keep the public wary of Spider-Man, and keep him a 'loner'."—Danny DeVere, Haskell, N. J. . . . "I think Spider-Man should have a super partner to help him out even if he doesn't need help."—Robert Dwyer, Marlboro, Mass. . . . "We found a clubhouse for our Spider-Man Club, and it's full of spiders! Would you give us a good name for our clubhouse?"—Ricky Gil, Los Angeles, Cal. (Ed. note: How about the SPIDER-MANsion?) . . . "Until I ran across your Spider-Man I would not even go near a comic for fear of somebody ribbing me, but this book opens up an entirely new field in comic history."—Mike Roese, Fort Wayne, Ind. . . . "I'd like to see Spider-Man and the Torch come together again."—Michael Bissonnette, Chicopee Falls, Mass.

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Dear Stan and Steve,

SPIDER-MAN is improving as I knew he would have to after seeing how the F.F. improved. Thanks for making it monthly. I like the way you answer the letters — you don't beat around the bush, but get straight to the point. What's even more important, you speak our language and remember to say "thanks" which is something rarely done in the letters section of a comic.

Christine Cassello
8017 S. Muskegon
Chicago 17, Ill.

Yep, that's ONE thing you can say about us, Chris—our mags may be riddled with errors, our fans may be deserting us in droves, Stan and Steve may be running out of ideas, but one thing is for sure—we're polite! Nice of you to notice, gal—thanks.

Dear Stan and Steve,

I read the story about Dr. Octopus in SPIDER-MAN and it was great. Now in the part where Spider-Man says, "It's almost too easy. I've run out of enemies who can give me any real opposition." . . . that certainly isn't true. Every issue gives him a very powerful foe to fight. (Except for that, the whole thing was perfect.) When Spider-Man sees Dr. Octopus, the arms are coming out of his suit. Did the arms become a part of him, or were they just covered up? I liked the appearance of the Human Torch. No matter what anybody else says about it, he spoke the greatest words I have ever heard. I think Spider-Man is a great, great hero, and I'd like to see him printed for another trillion years.

Franz Wright
132 Douglass St.
San Francisco 14, Cal.

So would WE, Franz, but let's be practical . . . we might have to settle for just a million or two! About Doc Ock's arms, to all intents and purposes they ARE part of him now.

Dear Stan and Steve,

It is my opinion that SPIDER-MAN #2 was the finest all-around comic magazine I've read in the past three or four years. For overall excellence it simply couldn't be matched. The artwork was truly superb, the finest Ditko art I've seen anywhere. The gothic settings (perhaps I should say semi-gothic) were ideally suited, since Spider-Man himself is something of a weird story hero, and should feel right at home in such a background. The stories were also extremely good, on all counts. #2 was a great surprise to me after reading the sorry mess you had created in #1, and I was all set to wave flags and blare out the news with brass bands when issue #3 hit the stands. However, I was disappointed. Maybe you people just work in short tremendous creative spurts or something, but I found #3 a great letdown. The story itself was good, better than most comic stories these days, but the art . . . Ditko plunged from one extreme to another. The art in #3 looked as though he had done it with a rat's tail, blindfolded perhaps. The misshapen figures and the appalling lack of anything resembling passable detail leads me to believe he must have done the whole comic in a mad rush. I certainly hope you will bring Spider-Man back up to the pinnacle of excellence you established for him with issue #2. He's such a unique and truly great character, he deserves only your best attentions.

Bob Jennings
3819 Chambers Drive
Nashville 11, Tenn.

Admit it, Bob—how much did THE HUMAN TORCH pay you to write that letter? You know we don't draw with rats' tails—they're too expensive! We use our fingernails, like everyone else!



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS SECTION:

Here it is, the section we like best! A place for us to get together, relax a while, and chew the fat about comic mags. First of all, let's start with an interesting announcement about one of SPIDER-MAN'S ex-villains...

- Remember the SANDMAN? Well, he made such a hit in SPIDERMAN #4 that we brought him back in another Marvel mag! And so, you'll find ol' Sandy in STRANGE TALES #115, fighting the HUMAN TORCH! It should be fun to see how Torchy fares against one of Pete Parker's most dangerous waltzing partners! STRANGE TALES #15 is on sale now—we think!
- Earth-shaking bulletin #2: Ask us who the guest star is in FANTASTIC FOUR #21! Go on, ASK us! Well, it's SGT. FURY! And if you're wondering how we managed to fit HIM into a story involving a different kind of super-villain with a totally different kind of super-power, there's one way to find out—and you know what THAT is!
- We've got so much to talk about, we don't know where to begin! It looks as though our two new mags, X-MEN and THE AVENGERS are destined to be runaway best-sellers! And there's been a lot of talk about DR. STRANGE (In STRANGE TALES, of course). Those that don't like him really HATE the poor guy—and those who like him are WILD about him! Nobody's neutral! We'll give you the result of the pro-and-con count in a few issues. Meantime, if you haven't seen him yet, he's done by Stan and Steve—'nuff said!
- By the way, don't delay in letting us know how you like the big changes in TALES TO ASTONISH and TALES OF SUSPENSE! Ant-Man, as you know, has become GIANT-MAN. And IRON MAN—well, you'll have to SEE what we've done to him! Hope you like it! (That's probably the most unnecessary phrase ever written! If you DON'T like the mags we edit for you, we'll shoot ourselves!)
- Here's our most difficult announcement: We want to ask your permission to discontinue this letters section! Now hold on, before you hit the ceiling! We KNOW you enjoy these two pages! WE enjoy 'em, too! But, they take HOURS to put together—to select the letters, write the copy, etc., and we'd rather spend that time producing new strips for you. We feel it would be best to have only one clearing house for all Marvel Mail, and that would be the FANTASTIC FOUR Mag. So, how about it? Suppose all the mail for all the Marvel Mags is sent to FF? That'll give SPIDER-MAN two extra pages for longer stories, features, or what-have-you! We'll do nothing till we hear from you, so let us know. But, as a special favor, we hope you'll tell us you don't mind.
- Okay, time to close shop for now. So let's put away our little webs till next ish, when we'll bring you another book-length epic which all you armchair critics can tear apart to your heart's content! Till then, keep well, keep happy, and keep away from radioactive spiders!